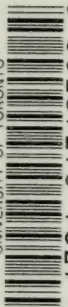


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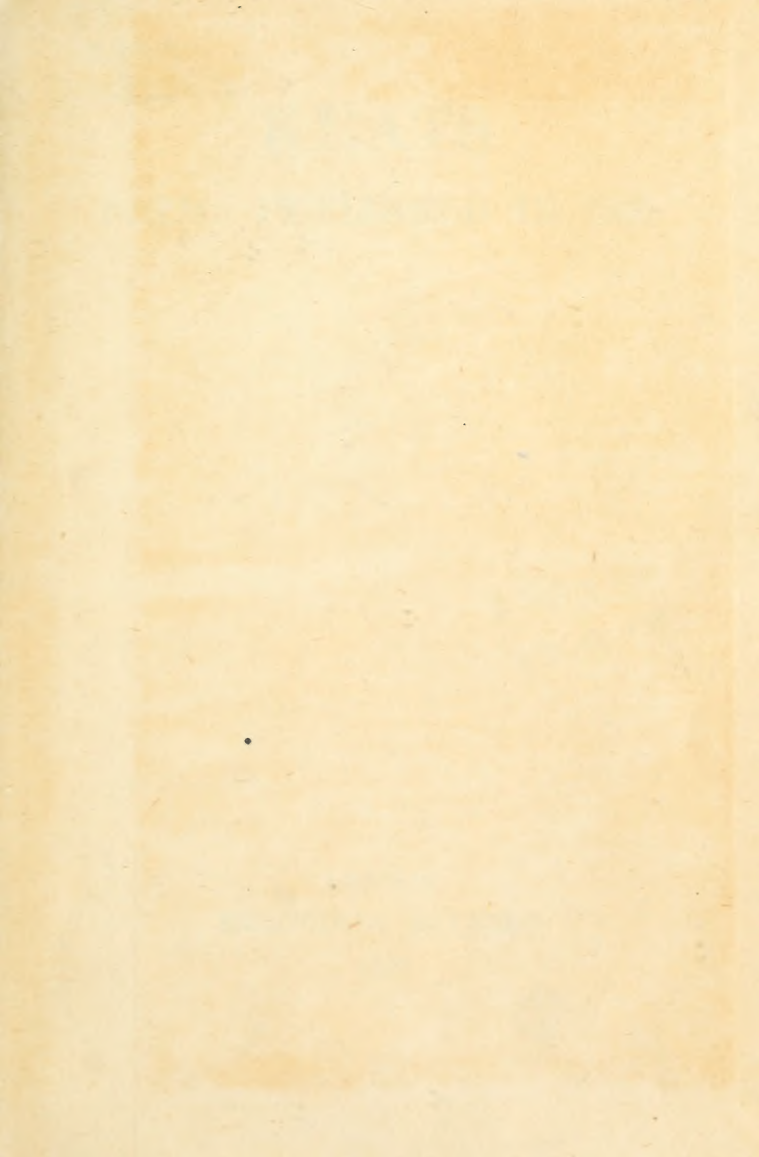
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# KEATS

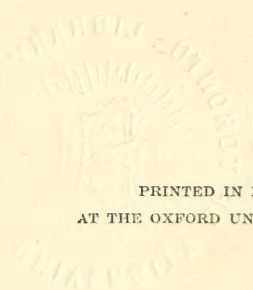
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## NOTE.

THE present edition is a reprint, page for page and line for line, of a copy of the 1820 volume in the British Museum. Line-numbers have been added for convenience of reference. A misprint on p. 184 has been corrected (see p. 200).

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LAMIA,  
ISABELLA,  
THE EVE OF ST. AGNES,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

---

BY JOHN KEATS.

AUTHOR OF ENDYMION.

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LONDON :  
PRINTED FOR TAYLOR AND HESSEY,  
FLEET-STREET.

1820.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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IF any apology be thought necessary for the appearance of the unfinished poem of *HYPERION*, the publishers beg to state that they alone are responsible, as it was printed at their particular request, and contrary to the wish of the author. The poem was intended to have been of equal length with *ENDYMION*, but the reception given to that work discouraged the author from proceeding.

*Fleet-Street, June 26, 1820.*

# L A M I A.



## PART I.

UPON a time, before the faery broods  
Drove Nymph and Satyr from the prosperous woods,  
Before King Oberon's bright diadem,  
Sceptre, and mantle, clasp'd with dewy gem,  
Frighted away the Dryads and the Fauns  
From rushes green, and brakes, and cowslip'd lawns,  
The ever-smitten Hermes empty left  
His golden throne, bent warm on amorous theft :

From high Olympus had he stolen light,  
On this side of Jove's clouds, to escape the sight 10  
Of his great summoner, and made retreat  
Into a forest on the shores of Crete.

For somewhere in that sacred island dwelt  
A nymph, to whom all hoofed Satyrs knelt ;  
At whose white feet the languid Tritons poured  
Pearls, while on land they wither'd and adored.  
Fast by the springs where she to bathe was wont,  
And in those meads where sometime she might haunt,  
Were strewn rich gifts, unknown to any Muse,  
Though Fancy's casket were unlock'd to choose. 20  
Ah, what a world of love was at her feet !

So Hermes thought, and a celestial heat  
Burnt from his winged heels to either ear,  
That from a whiteness, as the lily clear,  
Blush'd into roses 'mid his golden hair,  
Fallen in jealous curls about his shoulders bare.

From vale to vale, from wood to wood, he flew,  
Breathing upon the flowers his passion new,  
And wound with many a river to its head,      29  
To find where this sweet nymph prepar'd her secret bed:  
In vain; the sweet nymph might nowhere be found,  
And so he rested, on the lonely ground,  
Pensive, and full of painful jealousies  
Of the Wood-Gods, and even the very trees.  
There as he stood, he heard a mournful voice,  
Such as once heard, in gentle heart, destroys  
All pain but pity: thus the lone voice spake:  
"When from this wreathed tomb shall I awake!  
"When move in a sweet body fit for life,  
"And love, and pleasure, and the ruddy strife      40  
"Of hearts and lips! Ah, miserable me!"  
The God, dove-footed, glided silently  
Round bush and tree, soft-brushing, in his speed,  
The taller grasses and full-flowering weed,

Until he found a palpitating snake,  
Bright, and cirque-couchant in a dusky brake.

She was a gordian shape of dazzling hue,  
Vermilion-spotted, golden, green, and blue;  
Striped like a zebra, freckled like a pard,  
Eyed like a peacock, and all crimson barr'd; 50  
And full of silver moons, that, as she breathed,  
Dissolv'd, or brighter shone, or interwreathed  
Their lustres with the gloomier tapestries—  
So rainbow-sided, touch'd with miseries,  
She seem'd, at once, some penanced lady elf,  
Some demon's mistress, or the demon's self.  
Upon her crest she wore a wannish fire  
Sprinkled with stars, like Ariadne's tiar:  
Her head was serpent, but ah, bitter-sweet! 50  
She had a woman's mouth with all its pearls complete:  
And for her eyes: what could such eyes do there

But weep, and weep, that they were born so fair?  
As Proserpine still weeps for her Sicilian air.  
Her throat was serpent, but the words she spake  
Came, as through bubbling honey, for Love's sake,  
And thus; while Hermes on his pinions lay,  
Like a stoop'd falcon ere he takes his prey.

“ Fair Hermes, crown'd with feathers, fluttering light,  
“ I had a splendid dream of thee last night:  
“ I saw thee sitting, on a throne of gold,            70  
“ Among the Gods, upon Olympus old,  
“ The only sad one; for thou didst not hear  
“ The soft, lute-finger'd Muses chaunting clear,  
“ Nor even Apollo when he sang alone,  
“ Deaf to his throbbing throat's long, long melodious  
    moan.  
“ I dreamt I saw thee, robed in purple flakes,  
“ Break amorous through the clouds, as morning breaks,

“ And, swiftly as a bright Phœbean dart,  
“ Strike for the Cretan isle ; and here thou art !  
“ Too gentle Hermes, hast thou found the maid ? ” 80  
Whereat the star of Lethe not delay’d  
His rosy eloquence, and thus inquired :  
“ Thou smooth-lipp’d serpent, surely high inspired !  
“ Thou beauteous wreath, with melancholy eyes,  
“ Possess whatever bliss thou canst devise,  
“ Telling me only where my nymph is fled,—  
“ Where she doth breathe ! ” “ Bright planet, thou  
    hast said,”  
Return’d the snake, “ but seal with oaths, fair God ! ”  
“ I swear,” said Hermes, “ by my serpent rod,  
“ And by thine eyes, and by thy starry crown ! ” 90  
Light flew his earnest words, among the blossoms  
    blown.  
Then thus again the brilliance feminine :  
“ Too frail of heart ! for this lost nymph of thine,



“ Free as the air, invisibly, she strays  
“ About these thornless wilds ; her pleasant days  
“ She tastes unseen ; unseen her nimble feet  
“ Leave traces in the grass and flowers sweet ;  
“ From weary tendrils, and bow’d branches green,  
“ She plucks the fruit unseen, she bathes unseen :  
“ And by my power is her beauty veil’d            100  
“ To keep it unaffronted, unassail’d  
“ By the love-glances of unlovely eyes,  
“ Of Satyrs, Fauns, and blear’d Silenus’ sighs.  
“ Pale grew her immortality, for woe  
“ Of all these lovers, and she grieved so  
“ I took compassion on her, bade her steep  
“ Her hair in weird syrops, that would keep  
“ Her loveliness invisible, yet free  
“ To wander as she loves, in liberty.  
“ Thou shalt behold her, Hermes, thou alone,    110  
“ If thou wilt, as thou swearest, grant my boon !”

Then, once again, the charmed God began  
An oath, and through the serpent's ears it ran  
Warm, tremulous, devout, psalterian.  
Ravish'd, she lifted her Circean head,  
Blush'd a live damask, and swift-lisping said,  
"I was a woman, let me have once more  
"A woman's shape, and charming as before.  
"I love a youth of Corinth—O the bliss!       119  
"Give me my woman's form, and place me where he is.  
"Stoop, Hermes, let me breathe upon thy brow,  
"And thou shalt see thy sweet nymph even now."  
The God on half-shut feathers sank serene,  
She breath'd upon his eyes, and swift was seen  
Of both the guarded nymph near-smiling on the green.  
It was no dream; or say a dream it was,  
Real are the dreams of Gods, and smoothly pass  
Their pleasures in a long immortal dream.  
One warm, flush'd moment, hovering, it might seem

Dash'd by the wood-nymph's beauty, so he burn'd ;  
Then, lighting on the printless verdure, turn'd 131  
To the swoon'd serpent, and with languid arm,  
Delicate, put to proof the lythe Caducean charm.  
So done, upon the nymph his eyes he bent  
Full of adoring tears and blandishment,  
And towards her stept : she, like a moon in wane,  
Faded before him, cower'd, nor could restrain  
Her fearful sobs, self-folding like a flower  
That faints into itself at evening hour :  
But the God fostering her chilled hand, 140  
She felt the warmth, her eyelids open'd bland,  
And, like new flowers at morning song of bees,  
Bloom'd, and gave up her honey to the lecs.  
Into the green-recessed woods they flew ;  
Nor grew they pale, as mortal lovers do.

Left to herself, the serpent now began  
To change ; her elfin blood in madness ran,

Her mouth foam'd, and the grass, therewith besprent,  
Wither'd at dew so sweet and virulent ;  
Her eyes in torture fix'd, and anguish drear,   150  
Hot, glaz'd, and wide, with lid-lashes all sear,  
Flash'd phosphor and sharp sparks, without one cooling  
tear.

The colours all inflam'd throughout her train,  
She writh'd about, convuls'd with scarlet pain :  
A deep volcanian yellow took the place  
Of all her milder-mooned body's grace ;  
And, as the lava ravishes the mead,  
Spoilt all her silver mail, and golden brede ,  
Made gloom of all her frecklings, streaks and bars,  
Eclips'd her crescents, and lick'd up her stars : 160  
So that, in moments few, she was undrest  
Of all her sapphires, greens, and amethyst,  
And rubious-argent : of all these bereft,  
Nothing but pain and ugliness were left.

Still shone her crown ; that vanish'd, also she  
Melted and disappear'd as suddenly ;  
And in the air, her new voice luting soft,  
Cried, " Lycius ! gentle Lycius !" — Borne aloft  
With the bright mists about the mountains hoar  
These words dissolv'd : Crete's forests heard no more.

Whither fled Lamia, now a lady bright,            171  
A full-born beauty new and exquisite ?  
She fled into that valley they pass o'er  
Who go to Corinth from Cenchreas' shore ;  
And rested at the foot of those wild hills,  
The rugged founts of the Peræan rills,  
And of that other ridge whose barren back  
Stretches, with all its mist and cloudy rack,  
South-westward to Cleone. There she stood  
About a young bird's flutter from a wood,            180  
Fair, on a sloping green of mossy tread,  
By a clear pool, wherein she passioned

To see herself escap'd from so sore ills,  
While her robes flaunted with the daffodils.

Ah, happy Lycius!—for she was a maid  
More beautiful than ever twisted braid,  
Or sigh'd, or blush'd, or on spring-flowered lea  
Spread a green kirtle to the minstrelsy :  
A virgin purest lipp'd, yet in the lore  
Of love deep learned to the red heart's core : 190  
Not one hour old, yet of scintial brain  
To unperplex bliss from its neighbour pain ;  
Define their pettish limits, and estrange  
Their points of contact, and swift counterchange ;  
Intrigue with the specious chaos, and dispart  
Its most ambiguous atoms with sure art ;  
As though in Cupid's college she had spent  
Sweet days a lovely graduate, still unshent,  
And kept his rosy terms in idle languishment.

Why this fair creature chose so fairily                    200  
By the wayside to linger, we shall see ;  
But first 'tis fit to tell how she could muse  
And dream, when in the serpent prison-house,  
Of all she list, strange or magnificent :  
How, ever, where she will'd, her spirit went ;  
Whether to faint Elysium, or where  
Down through tress-lifting waves the Nereids fair  
Wind into Thetis' bower by many a pearly stair ;  
Or where God Bacchus drains his cups divine,  
Stretch'd out, at ease, beneath a glutinous pine ; 210  
Or where in Pluto's gardens palatine  
Mulciber's columns gleam in far piazzian line.  
And sometimes into cities she would send  
Her dream, with feast and rioting to blend ;  
And once, while among mortals dreaming thus,  
She saw the young Corinthian Lycius  
Charioting foremost in the envious race,  
Like a young Jove with calm uneager face,

And fell into a swooning love of him.  
Now on the moth-time of that evening dim 220  
He would return that way, as well she knew,  
To Corinth from the shore ; for freshly blew  
The eastern soft wind, and his galley now  
Grated the quaystones with her brazen prow  
In port Cenchreas, from Egina isle  
Fresh anchor'd ; whither he had been awhile  
To sacrifice to Jove, whose temple there  
Waits with high marble doors for blood and incense rare.  
Jove heard his vows, and better'd his desire ;  
For by some freakful chance he made retire 230  
From his companions, and set forth to walk,  
Perhaps grown wearied of their Corinth talk :  
Over the solitary hills he fared,  
Thoughtless at first, but ere eve's star appeared  
His phantasy was lost, where reason fades,  
In the calm'd twilight of Platonic shades.



Lamia beheld him coming, near, more near—  
Close to her passing, in indifference drear,  
His silent sandals swept the mossy green ;  
So neighbour'd to him, and yet so unseen      240  
She stood : he pass'd, shut up in mysteries,  
His mind wrapp'd like his mantle, while her eyes  
Follow'd his steps, and her neck regal white  
Turn'd—syllabbling thus, “ Ah, Lycius bright,  
“ And will you leave me on the hills alone ?  
“ Lycius, look back ! and be some pity shown.”  
He did ; not with cold wonder fearingly,  
But Orpheus-like at an Eurydice ;  
For so delicious were the words she sung,  
It seem'd he had lov'd them a whole summer long : 250  
And soon his eyes had drunk her beauty up,  
Leaving no drop in the bewildering cup,  
And still the cup was full,—while he, afraid  
Lest she should vanish ere his lip had paid

Due adoration, thus began to adore ;

Her soft look growing coy, she saw his chain so sure

“ Leave thee alone ! Look back ! Ah, Goddess, see

“ Whether my eyes can ever turn from thee !

“ For pity do not this sad heart belie—

“ Even as thou vanishest so I shall die. 260

“ Stay ! though a Naiad of the rivers, stay !

“ To thy far wishes will thy streams obey :

“ Stay ! though the greenest woods be thy domain,

“ Alone they can drink up the morning rain :

“ Though a descended Pleiad, will not one

“ Of thine harmonious sisters keep in tune

“ Thy spheres, and as thy silver proxy shine ?

“ So sweetly to these ravish'd ears of mine

“ Came thy sweet greeting, that if thou shouldst fade

“ Thy memory will waste me to a shade :— 270

“ For pity do not melt ! ”—“ If I should stay,”

Said Lamia, “ here, upon this floor of clay,

“ And pain my steps upon these flowers too rough,  
“ What canst thou say or do of charm enough  
“ To dull the nice remembrance of my home ?  
“ Thou canst not ask me with thee here to roam  
“ Over these hills and vales, where no joy is,—  
“ Empty of immortality and bliss !  
“ Thou art a scholar, Lycius, and must know  
“ That finer spirits cannot breathe below           280  
“ In human climes, and live : Alas ! poor youth,  
“ What taste of purer air hast thou to soothe  
“ My essence ? What serener palaces,  
“ Where I may all my many senses please,  
“ And by mysterious sleights a hundred thirsts appease ?  
“ It cannot be—Adieu ! ” So said, she rose  
Tiptoe with white arms spread. He, sick to lose  
The amorous promise of her lone complain,  
Swoon'd, murmuring of love, and pale with pain.

The cruel lady, without any show 230  
Of sorrow for her tender favourite's woe,  
But rather, if her eyes could brighter be,  
With brighter eyes and slow amenity,  
Put her new lips to his, and gave afresh  
The life she had so tangled in her mesh:  
And as he from one trance was wakening  
Into another, she began to sing,  
Happy in beauty, life, and love, and every thing,  
A song of love, too sweet for earthly lyres,  
While, like held breath, the stars drew in their pant-  
ing fires. 300

And then she whisper'd in such trembling tone,  
As those who, safe together met alone  
For the first time through many anguish'd days,  
Use other speech than looks; bidding him raise  
His drooping head, and clear his soul of doubt,  
For that she was a woman, and without

Any more subtle fluid in her veins  
Than throbbing blood, and that the self-same pains  
Inhabited her frail-strung heart as his.  
And next she wonder'd how his eyes could miss 310  
Her face so long in Corinth, where, she said,  
She dwelt but half retir'd, and there had led  
Days happy as the gold coin could invent  
Without the aid of love ; yet in content  
Till she saw him, as once she pass'd him by,  
Where 'gainst a column he leant thoughtfully  
At Venus' temple porch, 'mid baskets heap'd  
Of amorous herbs and flowers, newly reap'd  
Late on that eve, as 'twas the night before  
The Adonian feast ; whereof she saw no more, 320  
But wept alone those days, for why should she adore ?  
Lycius from death awoke into amaze,  
To see her still, and singing so sweet lays ;

Then from amaze into delight he fell  
To hear her whisper woman's lore so well ;  
And every word she spake entic'd him on  
To unperplex'd delight and pleasure known.  
Let the mad poets say whate'er they please  
Of the sweets of Fairies, Peris, Goddesses,  
There is not such a treat among them all, 330  
Haunters of cavern, lake, and waterfall,  
As a real woman, lineal indeed  
From Pyrrha's pebbles or old Adam's seed.  
Thus gentle Lamia judg'd, and judg'd aright,  
That Lycius could not love in half a fright,  
So threw the goddess off, and won his heart  
More pleasantly by playing woman's part,  
With no more awe than what her beauty gave,  
That, while it smote, still guaranteed to save.  
Lycius to all made eloquent reply, 340  
Marrying to every word a twinborn sigh ;

And last, pointing to Corinth, ask'd her sweet,  
If 'twas too far that night for her soft feet.  
The way was short, for Lamia's eagerness  
Made, by a spell, the triple league decrease  
To a few paces; not at all surmised  
By blinded Lycius, so in her comprized.  
They pass'd the city gates, he knew not how,  
So noiseless, and he never thought to know.

As men talk in a dream, so Corinth all,      350  
Throughout her palaces imperial,  
And all her populous streets and temples lewd,  
Mutter'd, like tempest in the distance brew'd,  
To the wide-spreaded night above her towers.  
Men, women, rich and poor, in the cool hours,  
Shuffled their sandals o'er the pavement white,  
Companion'd or alone; while many a light  
Flared, here and there, from wealthy festivals,  
And threw their moving shadows on the walls,

Or found them cluster'd in the corniced shade 360  
Of some arch'd temple door, or dusky colonnade.

Muffling his face, of greeting friends in fear,  
Her fingers he press'd hard, as one came near  
With curl'd gray beard, sharp eyes, and smooth bald  
crown,

Slow-stepp'd, and robed in philosophic gown :  
Lycius shrank closer, as they met and past,  
Into his mantle, adding wings to haste,  
While hurried Lamia trembled : " Ah," said he,  
" Why do you shudder, love, so ruefully ?  
" Why does your tender palm dissolve in dew ?"—370  
" I'm wearied," said fair Lamia : " tell me who  
" Is that old man ? I cannot bring to mind  
" His features :—Lycius ! wherefore did you blind  
" Yourself from his quick eyes ?" Lycius replied,  
" 'Tis Apollonius sage, my trusty guide



“And good instructor ; but to-night he seems

“The ghost of folly haunting my sweet dreams.”

While yet he spake they had arrived before  
A pillar'd porch, with lofty portal door,  
Where hung a silver lamp, whose phosphor glow 380  
Reflected in the slabbed steps below,  
Mild as a star in water ; for so new,  
And so unsullied was the marble hue,  
So through the crystal polish, liquid fine,  
Ran the dark veins, that none but feet divine  
Could e'er have touch'd there. Sounds Æolian  
Breath'd from the hinges, as the ample span  
Of the wide doors disclos'd a place unknown  
Some time to any, but those two alone,  
And a few Persian mutes, who that same year 390  
Were seen about the markets : none knew where

They could inhabit; the most curious  
Were foil'd, who watch'd to trace them to their house :  
And but the flitter-winged verse must tell  
For truth's sake, what woe afterwards befel,  
'Twould humour many a heart to leave them thus,  
Shut from the busy world of more incredulous.

# L A M I A.

---

## PART II.

LOVE in a hut, with water and a crust,  
Is—Love, forgive us!—cinders, ashes, dust;  
Love in a palace is perhaps at last  
More grievous torment than a hermit's fast:—  
That is a doubtful tale from faery land,  
Hard for the non-elect to understand.  
Had Lycius liv'd to hand his story down,  
He might have given the moral a fresh frown,  
Or clench'd it quite: but too short was their bliss 9  
To breed distrust and hate, that make the soft voice hiss.

Besides, there, nightly, with terrific glare,  
Love, jealous grown of so complete a pair,  
Hover'd and buzz'd his wings, with fearful roar,  
Above the lintel of their chamber door,  
And down the passage cast a glow upon the floor.

For all this came a ruin : side by side  
They were enthroned, in the even tide,  
Upon a couch, near to a curtaining  
Whose airy texture, from a golden string,  
Floated into the room, and let appear 20  
Unveil'd the summer heaven, blue and clear,  
Betwixt two marble shafts :—there they reposed,  
Where use had made it sweet, with eyelids closed,  
Saving a tythe which love still open kept,  
That they might see each other while they almost slept;  
When from the slope side of a suburb hill,  
Deafening the swallow's twitter, came a thrill

Of trumpets—Lycius started—the sounds fled,  
But left a thought, a buzzing in his head.  
For the first time, since first he harbour'd in 30  
That purple-lined palace of sweet sin,  
His spirit pass'd beyond its golden bourn  
Into the noisy world almost forsworn.  
The lady, ever watchful, penetrant,  
Saw this with pain, so arguing a want  
Of something more, more than her empery  
Of joys; and she began to moan and sigh  
Because he mused beyond her, knowing well  
That but a moment's thought is passion's passing bell.  
“Why do you sigh, fair creature?” whisper'd he : 40  
“Why do you think?” return'd she tenderly :  
“You have deserted me;—where am I now ?  
“Not in your heart while care weighs on your brow :  
“No, no, you have dismiss'd me; and I go  
“From your breast houseless : ay, it must be so.”

He answer'd, bending to her open eyes,  
Where he was mirror'd small in paradise,  
“ My silver planet, both of eve and morn !  
“ Why will you plead yourself so sad forlorn,  
“ While I am striving how to fill my heart      50  
“ With deeper crimson, and a double smart ?  
“ How to entangle, trammel up and snare  
“ Your soul in mine, and labyrinth you there  
“ Like the hid scent in an unbudded rose ?  
“ Ay, a sweet kiss—you see your mighty woes.  
“ My thoughts ! shall I unveil them ? Listen then !  
“ What mortal hath a prize, that other men  
“ May be confounded and abash'd withal,  
“ But lets it sometimes pace abroad majestic,  
“ And triumph, as in thee I should rejoice      60  
“ Amid the hoarse alarm of Corinth's voice.  
“ Let my foes choke, and my friends shout afar,  
“ While through the thronged streets your bridal car

“Wheels round its dazzling spokes.”—The lady’s cheek  
Trembled ; she nothing said, but, pale and meek,  
Arose and knelt before him, wept a rain  
Of sorrows at his words ; at last with pain  
Beseeching him, the while his hand she wrung,  
To change his purpose. He thereat was stung,  
Perverse, with stronger fancy to reclaim 70  
Her wild and timid nature to his aim :  
Besides, for all his love, in self despite  
Against his better self, he took delight  
Luxurious in her sorrows, soft and new.  
His passion, cruel grown, took on a hue  
Fierce and sanguineous as ’twas possible  
In one whose brow had no dark veins to swell.  
Fine was the mitigated fury, like  
Apollo’s presence when in act to strike  
The serpent—Ha, the serpent ! certes, she 80  
Was none. She burnt, she lov’d the tyranny,

And, all subdued, consented to the hour  
When to the bridal he should lead his paramour.  
Whispering in midnight silence, said the youth,  
“Sure some sweet name thou hast, though, by my truth,  
“I have not ask’d it, ever thinking thee  
“Not mortal, but of heavenly progeny,  
“As still I do. Hast any mortal name,  
“Fit appellation for this dazzling frame?  
“Or friends or kinsfolk on the citted earth, 90  
“To share our marriage feast and nuptial mirth?”  
“I have no friends,” said Lamia, “no, not one;  
“My presence in wide Corinth hardly known:  
“My parents’ bones are in their dusty urns  
“Sepulchred, where no kindled incense burns,  
“Seeing all their luckless race are dead, save me,  
“And I neglect the holy rite for thee.  
“Even as you list invite your many guests;  
“But if, as now it seems, your vision rests



“ With any pleasure on me, do not bid 100

“ Old Apollonius—from him keep me hid.”

Lycius, perplex'd at words so blind and blank,  
Made close inquiry ; from whose touch she shrank,  
Feigning a sleep ; and he to the dull shade  
Of deep sleep in a moment was betray'd.

It was the custom then to bring away  
The bride from home at blushing shut of day,  
Veil'd, in a chariot, heralded along  
By strewn flowers, torches, and a marriage song,  
With other pageants : but this fair unknown 110  
Had not a friend. So being left alone,  
(Lycius was gone to summon all his kin)  
And knowing surely she could never win  
His foolish heart from its mad pompousness,  
She set herself, high-thoughted, how to dress

The misery in fit magnificence.

She did so, but 'tis doubtful how and whence

Came, and who were her subtle servitors.

About the halls, and to and from the doors,

There was a noise of wings, till in short space 120

The glowing banquet-room shone with wide-arched  
grace.

A haunting music, sole perhaps and lone

Supportress of the faery-roof, made moan

Throughout, as fearful the whole charm might fade.

Fresh carved cedar, mimicking a glade

Of palm and plantain, met from either side,

High in the midst, in honour of the bride :

Two palms and then two plantains, and so on,

From either side their stems branch'd one to one

All down the aisled place ; and beneath all 130

There ran a stream of lamps straight on from wall to  
wall.

So canopied, lay an untasted feast  
Teeming with odours. Lamia, regal drest,  
Silently paced about, and as she went,  
In pale contented sort of discontent,  
Mission'd her viewless servants to enrich  
The fretted splendour of each nook and niche.  
Between the tree-stems, marbled plain at first,  
Came jasper pannels; then, anon, there burst  
Forth creeping imagery of slighter trees,           140  
And with the larger wove in small intricacies.  
Approving all, she faded at self-will,  
And shut the chamber up, close, hush'd and still,  
Complete and ready for the revels rude,  
When dreadful guests would come to spoil her  
solitude.

The day appear'd, and all the gossip rout.  
O senseless Lycius! Madman! wherefore flout

The silent-blessing fate, warm cloister'd hours,  
And show to common eyes these secret bowers ?  
The herd approach'd ; each guest, with busy brain,  
Arriving at the portal, gaz'd amain, 151  
And enter'd marveling : for they knew the street,  
Remember'd it from childhood all complete  
Without a gap, yet ne'er before had seen  
That royal porch, that high-built fair demesne ;  
So in they hurried all, maz'd, curious and keen :  
Save one, who look'd thereon with eye severe,  
And with calm-planted steps walk'd in austere ;  
'Twas Apollonius : something too he laugh'd,  
As though some knotty problem, that had daft 160  
His patient thought, had now begun to thaw,  
And solve and melt :—'twas just as he foresaw.

He met within the murmurous vestibule  
His young disciple. " 'Tis no common rule,

“Lycius,” said he, “for uninvited guest  
“To force himself upon you, and infest  
“With an unbidden presence the bright throng  
“Of younger friends; yet must I do this wrong,  
“And you forgive me.” Lycius blush’d, and led  
The old man through the inner doors broad-spread;  
With reconciling words and courteous mien 171  
Turning into sweet milk the sophist’s spleen.

Of wealthy lustre was the banquet-room,  
Fill’d with pervading brilliance and perfume:  
Before each lucid pannel fuming stood  
A censer fed with myrrh and spiced wood,  
Each by a sacred tripod held aloft,  
Whose slender feet wide-swerv’d upon the soft  
Wool-woofed carpets: fifty wreaths of smoke  
From fifty censers their light voyage took 180

To the high roof, still mimick'd as they rose  
Along the mirror'd walls by twin-clouds odorous.  
Twelve sphered tables, by silk seats insphered,  
High as the level of a man's breast rear'd  
On libbard's paws, upheld the heavy gold  
Of cups and goblets, and the store thrice told  
Of Ceres' horn, and, in huge vessels, wine  
Come from the gloomy tun with merry shine.  
Thus loaded with a feast the tables stood,  
Each shrining in the midst the image of a God. 190

When in an antichamber every guest  
Had felt the cold full sponge to pleasure press'd,  
By minist'ring slaves, upon his hands and feet,  
And fragrant oils with ceremony meet  
Pour'd on his hair, they all mov'd to the feast  
In white robes, and themselves in order placed

Around the silken couches, wondering  
Whence all this mighty cost and blaze of wealth could  
spring.

Soft went the music the soft air along,  
While fluent Greek a vowel'd undersong 200  
Kept up among the guests, discoursing low  
At first, for scarcely was the wine at flow ;  
But when the happy vintage touch'd their brains,  
Louder they talk, and louder come the strains  
Of powerful instruments :—the gorgeous dyes,  
The space, the splendour of the draperies,  
The roof of awful richness, nectarous cheer,  
Beautiful slaves, and Lamia's self, appear,  
Now, when the wine has done its rosy deed,  
And every soul from human trammels freed, 210  
No more so strange ; for merry wine, sweet wine,  
Will make Elysian shades not too fair, too divine.

Soon was God Bacchus at meridian height ;  
Flush'd were their cheeks, and bright eyes double  
bright :

Garlands of every green, and every scent  
From vales deflower'd, or forest-trees branch-rent,  
In baskets of bright osier'd gold were brought  
High as the handles heap'd, to suit the thought  
Of every guest ; that each, as he did please,  
Might fancy-fit his brows, silk-pillow'd at his ease. 220

What wreath for Lamia ? What for Lycius ?  
What for the sage, old Apollonius ?  
Upon her aching forehead be there hung  
The leaves of willow and of adder's tongue ;  
And for the youth, quick, let us strip for him  
The thyrsus, that his watching eyes may swim  
Into forgetfulness ; and, for the sage,  
Let spear-grass and the spiteful thistle wage



War on his temples. Do not all charms fly  
At the mere touch of cold philosophy? 230  
There was an awful rainbow once in heaven:  
We know her woof, her texture; she is given  
In the dull catalogue of common things.  
Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,  
Conquer all mysteries by rule and line,  
Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine—  
Unweave a rainbow, as it erewhile made  
The tender-person'd Lamia melt into a shade.

By her glad Lycius sitting, in chief place,  
Scarce saw in all the room another face, 240  
Till, checking his love trance, a cup he took  
Full brimm'd, and opposite sent forth a look  
'Cross the broad table, to beseech a glance  
From his old teacher's wrinkled countenance,

And pledge him. The bald-head philosopher  
Had fix'd his eye, without a twinkle or stir  
Full on the alarmed beauty of the bride,  
Brow-beating her fair form, and troubling her sweet  
pride.

Lycius then press'd her hand, with devout touch,  
As pale it lay upon the rosy couch : 250

'Twas icy, and the cold ran through his veins ;

Then sudden it grew hot, and all the pains  
Of an unnatural heat shot to his heart.

“ Lamia, what means this ? Wherefore dost thou start ?

“ Know'st thou that man ? ” Poor Lamia answer'd not.

He gaz'd into her eyes, and not a jot

Own'd they the lovelorn piteous appeal :

More, more he gaz'd : his human senses reel :

Some hungry spell that loveliness absorbs ;

There was no recognition in those orbs. 260

“Lamia!” he cried—and no soft-toned reply.

The many heard, and the loud revelry

Grew hush; the stately music no more breathes;

The myrtle sicken’d in a thousand wreaths.

By faint degrees, voice, lute, and pleasure ceased;

A deadly silence step by step increased,

Until it seem’d a horrid presence there,

And not a man but felt the terror in his hair.

“Lamia!” he shriek’d; and nothing but the shriek

With its sad echo did the silence break. 270

“Begone, foul dream!” he cried, gazing again

In the bride’s face, where now no azure vein

Wander’d on fair-spaced temples; no soft bloom

Misted the cheek; no passion to illumine

The deep-recessed vision:—all was blight;

Lamia, no longer fair, there sat a deadly white.

“Shut, shut those juggling eyes, thou ruthless man!

“Turn them aside, wretch! or the righteous ban

“ Of all the Gods, whose dreadful images  
“ Here represent their shadowy presences,           280  
“ May pierce them on the sudden with the thorn  
“ Of painful blindness; leaving thee forlorn,  
“ In trembling dotage to the feeblest fright  
“ Of conscience, for their long offended might,  
“ For all thine impious proud-heart sophistries,  
“ Unlawful magic, and enticing lies.  
“ Corinthians! look upon that gray-beard wretch!  
“ Mark how, possess’d, his lashless eyelids stretch  
“ Around his demon eyes! Corinthians, see!  
“ My sweet bride withers at their potency.”       290  
“ Fool!” said the sophist, in an under-tone  
Gruff with contempt; which a death-nighing moan  
From Lycius answer’d, as heart-struck and lost,  
He sank supine beside the aching ghost.  
“ Fool! Fool!” repeated he, while his eyes still  
Relented not, nor mov’d; “ from every ill

“Of life have I preserv’d thee to this day,  
“And shall I see thee made a serpent’s prey?”  
Then Lamia breath’d death breath; the sophist’s eye,  
Like a sharp spear, went through her utterly, 300  
Keen, cruel, perceant, stinging: she, as well  
As her weak hand could any meaning tell,  
Motion’d him to be silent; vainly so,  
He look’d and look’d again a level—No!  
“A Serpent!” echoed he; no sooner said,  
Than with a frightful scream she vanished:  
And Lycius’ arms were empty of delight,  
As were his limbs of life, from that same night.  
On the high couch he lay!—his friends came round—  
Supported him—no pulse, or breath they found, 310  
And, in its marriage robe, the heavy body wound.\*

\* “Philostratus, in his fourth book *de Vita Apollonii*, hath a memorable instance in this kind, which I may not omit, of one Menippus Lycius, a young man twenty-five years of age, that going betwixt Cenchreas and Corinth, met such a phantasm in the

habit of a fair gentlewoman, which taking him by the hand, carried him home to her house, in the suburbs of Corinth, and told him she was a Phœnician by birth, and if he would tarry with her, he should hear her sing and play, and drink such wine as never any drank, and no man should molest him; but she, being fair and lovely, would live and die with him, that was fair and lovely to behold. The young man, a philosopher, otherwise staid and discreet, able to moderate his passions, though not this of love, tarried with her a while to his great content, and at last married her, to whose wedding, amongst other guests, came Apollonius; who, by some probable conjectures, found her out to be a serpent, a lamia; and that all her furniture was, like Tantalus' gold, described by Homer, no substance but mere illusions. When she saw herself descried, she wept, and desired Apollonius to be silent, but he would not be moved, and thereupon she, plate, house, and all that was in it, vanished in an instant: many thousands took notice of this fact, for it was done in the midst of Greece."

Burton's 'Anatomy of Melancholy.' Part 3. Sect. 2.

*Mem. 1. Subs. 1.*

ISABELLA ;

OR,

THE POT OF BASIL.

A STORY FROM BOCCACCIO.





# ISABELLA;

OR,

## THE POT OF BASIL.

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### I.

FAIR Isabel, poor simple Isabel!

Lorenzo, a young palmer in Love's eye!

They could not in the self-same mansion dwell

Without some stir of heart, some malady;

They could not sit at meals but feel how well

It soothed each to be the other by;

They could not, sure, beneath the same roof sleep

But to each other dream, and nightly weep.

## II.

With every morn their love grew tenderer,  
    With every eve deeper and tenderer still ;   10  
He might not in house, field, or garden stir,  
    But her full shape would all his seeing fill ;  
And his continual voice was pleasanter  
    To her, than noise of trees or hidden rill ;  
Her lute-string gave an echo of his name,  
She spoilt her half-done broidery with the same.

## III.

He knew whose gentle hand was at the latch,  
    Before the door had given her to his eyes ;  
And from her chamber-window he would catch  
    Her beauty farther than the falcon spies ;   20  
And constant as her vespers would he watch,  
    Because her face was turn'd to the same skies ;  
And with sick longing all the night outwear,  
To hear her morning-step upon the stair.

## IV.

A whole long month of May in this sad plight  
Made their cheeks paler by the break of June :  
“To-morrow will I bow to my delight,  
“To-morrow will I ask my lady’s boon.”—  
“O may I never see another night,  
“Lorenzo, if thy lips breathe not love’s tune.”—30  
So spake they to their pillows ; but, alas,  
Honeyless days and days did he let pass ;

## V.

Until sweet Isabella’s untouch’d cheek  
Fell sick within the rose’s just domain,  
Fell thin as a young mother’s, who doth seek  
By every lull to cool her infant’s pain :  
“How ill she is,” said he, “I may not speak,  
“And yet I will, and tell my love all plain :  
“If looks speak love-laws, I will drink her tears,  
“And at the least ’twill startle off her cares.” 40

## VI.

So said he one fair morning, and all day  
His heart beat awfully against his side ;  
And to his heart he inwardly did pray  
For power to speak ; but still the ruddy tide  
Stifled his voice, and puls'd resolve away—  
Fever'd his high conceit of such a bride,  
Yet brought him to the meekness of a child :  
Alas ! when passion is both meek and wild !

## VII.

So once more he had wak'd and anguished  
A dreary night of love and misery, 50  
If Isabel's quick eye had not been wed  
To every symbol on his forehead high ;  
She saw it waxing very pale and dead,  
And straight all flush'd ; so, lisped tenderly,  
“Lorenzo !”—here she ceas'd her timid quest,  
But in her tone and look he read the rest.

## VIII.

“ O Isabella, I can half perceive  
“ That I may speak my grief into thine ear ;  
“ If thou didst ever any thing believe,  
“ Believe how I love thee, believe how near 60  
“ My soul is to its doom : I would not grieve  
“ Thy hand by unwelcome pressing, would not fear  
“ Thine eyes by gazing ; but I cannot live  
“ Another night, and not my passion shrive.

## IX.

“ Love ! thou art leading me from wintry cold,  
“ Lady ! thou leadest me to summer clime,  
“ And I must taste the blossoms that unfold  
“ In its ripe warmth this gracious morning time.”  
So said, his erewhile timid lips grew bold,  
And poesied with hers in dewy rhyme : 70  
Great bliss was with them, and great happiness  
Grew, like a lusty flower in June’s caress.

## X.

Parting they seem'd to tread upon the air,  
Twin roses by the zephyr blown apart  
Only to meet again more close, and share  
The inward fragrance of each other's heart.  
She, to her chamber gone, a ditty fair  
Sang, of delicious love and honey'd dart ;  
He with light steps went up a western hill,  
And bade the sun farewell, and joy'd his fill. 80

## XI.

All close they met again, before the dusk  
Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,  
All close they met, all eves, before the dusk  
Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,  
Close in a bower of hyacinth and musk,  
Unknown of any, free from whispering tale.  
Ah ! better had it been for ever so,  
Than idle ears should pleasure in their woe.

## XII.

Were they unhappy then?—It cannot be—  
Too many tears for lovers have been shed, 90  
Too many sighs give we to them in fee,  
Too much of pity after they are dead,  
Too many doleful stories do we see,  
Whose matter in bright gold were best be read;  
Except in such a page where Theseus' spouse  
Over the pathless waves towards him bows.

## XIII.

But, for the general award of love,  
The little sweet doth kill much bitterness;  
Though Dido silent is in under-grove,  
And Isabella's was a great distress, 100  
Though young Lorenzo in warm Indian clove  
Was not embalm'd, this truth is not the less  
Even bees, the little almsmen of spring-bowers,  
Know there is richest juice in poison-flowers.

## XIV.

With her two brothers this fair lady dwelt,  
Enriched from ancestral merchandize,  
And for them many a weary hand did swelt  
In torched mines and noisy factories,  
And many once proud-quiver'd loins did melt  
In blood from stinging whip ;—with hollow eyes 110  
Many all day in dazzling river stood,  
To take the rich-ored driftings of the flood.

## XV.

For them the Ceylon diver held his breath,  
And went all naked to the hungry shark ;  
For them his ears gush'd blood ; for them in death  
The seal on the cold ice with piteous bark  
Lay full of darts ; for them alone did seethe  
A thousand men in troubles wide and dark :  
Half-ignorant, they turn'd an easy wheel,  
That set sharp racks at work, to pinch and peel. 120



## XVI.

Why were they proud ? Because their marble founts  
Gush'd with more pride than do a wretch's tears?—  
Why were they proud ? Because fair orange-mounts  
Were of more soft ascent than lazar stairs?—  
Why were they proud ? Because red-lin'd accounts  
Were richer than the songs of Grecian years?—  
Why were they proud ? again we ask aloud,  
Why in the name of Glory were they proud ?

## XVII.

Yet were these Florentines as self-retired  
In hungry pride and gainful cowardice,      130  
As two close Hebrews in that land inspired,  
Paled in and vineyarded from beggar-spies  
The hawks of ship-mast forests—the untired  
And pannier'd mules for ducats and old lies—  
Quick cat's-paws on the generous stray-away,—  
Great wits in Spanish, Tuscan, and Malay.

## XVIII.

How was it these same ledger-men could spy  
Fair Isabella in her downy nest ?  
How could they find out in Lorenzo's eye  
A straying from his toil ? Hot Egypt's pest 140  
Into their vision covetous and sly !  
How could these money-bags see east and west ?—  
Yet so they did—and every dealer fair  
Must see behind, as doth the hunted hare.

## XIX.

O eloquent and famed Boccaccio !  
Of thee we now should ask forgiving boon,  
And of thy spicy myrtles as they blow,  
And of thy roses amorous of the moon,  
And of thy lilies, that do paler grow  
Now they can no more hear thy ghittern's tune, 150  
For venturing syllables that ill bescem  
The quiet glooms of such a piteous theme.

## XX.

Grant thou a pardon here, and then the tale  
Shall move on soberly, as it is meet ;  
There is no other crime, no mad assail  
To make old prose in modern rhyme more sweet :  
But it is done—succeed the verse or fail—  
To honour thee, and thy gone spirit greet ;  
To stead thee as a verse in English tongue,  
An echo of thee in the north-wind sung. 160

## XXI.

These brethren having found by many signs  
What love Lorenzo for their sister had,  
And how she lov'd him too, each unconfines  
His bitter thoughts to other, well nigh mad  
That he, the servant of their trade designs,  
Should in their sister's love be blithe and glad,  
When 'twas their plan to coax her by degrees  
To some high noble and his olive-trees.

## XXII.

And many a jealous conference had they,  
And many times they bit their lips alone,     170  
Before they fix'd upon a surest way  
To make the youngster for his crime atone ;  
And at the last, these men of cruel clay  
Cut Mercy with a sharp knife to the bone ;  
For they resolved in some forest dim  
To kill Lorenzo, and there bury him.

## XXIII.

So on a pleasant morning, as he leant  
Into the sun-rise, o'er the balustrade  
Of the garden-terrace, towards him they bent  
Their footing through the dews; and to him said, 180  
“ You seem there in the quiet of content,  
“ Lorenzo, and we are most loth to invade  
“ Calm speculation ; but if you are wise,  
“ Bestride your steed while cold is in the skies.

## XXIV.

“To-day we purpose, ay, this hour we mount  
 “To spur three leagues towards the Apennine;  
 “Come down, we pray thee, ere the hot sun count  
 “His dewy rosary on the eglantine.”

Lorenzo, courteously as he was wont,  
 Bow'd a foir greeting to these serpents' whine; 190  
 And went in haste, to get in readiness,  
 With belt, and spur, and bracing huntsman's dress.

## XXV.

And as he to the court-yard pass'd along,  
 Each third step did he pause, and listen'd oft  
 If he could hear his lady's matin-song,  
 Or the light whisper of her footstep soft;  
 And as he thus over his passion hung,  
 He heard a laugh full musical aloft;  
 When, looking up, he saw her features bright  
 Smile through an in-door lattice, all delight. 200

## XXVI.

“Love, Isabel!” said he, “I was in pain

“Lest I should miss to bid thee a good morrow

“Ah! what if I should lose thee, when so fain

“I am to stifle all the heavy sorrow

“Of a poor three hours’ absence? but we’ll gain

“Out of the amorous dark what day doth borrow.

“Good bye! I’ll soon be back.”—“Good bye!” said she:—

And as he went she chanted merrily.

## XXVII.

So the two brothers and their murder’d man

Rode past fair Florence, to where Arno’s stream 210

Gurgles through straiten’d banks, and still doth fan

Itself with dancing bulrush, and the bream

Keeps head against the freshets. Sick and wan

The brothers’ faces in the ford did seem,

Lorenzo’s flush with love.—They pass’d the water

Into a forest quiet for the slaughter.

## XXVIII.

There was Lorenzo slain and buried in,  
There in that forest did his great love cease ;  
Ah ! when a soul doth thus its freedom win,  
It aches in loneliness—is ill at peace 220  
As the break-covert blood-hounds of such sin :  
They dipp'd their swords in the water, and did tease  
Their horses homeward, with convulsed spur,  
Each richer by his being a murderer.

## XXIX.

They told their sister how, with sudden speed,  
Lorenzo had ta'en ship for foreign lands,  
Because of some great urgency and need  
In their affairs, requiring trusty hands.  
Poor Girl ! put on thy stifling widow's weed,  
And 'scape at once from Hope's accursed bands ; 230  
To-day thou wilt not see him, nor to-morrow,  
And the next day will be a day of sorrow.

## XXX.

She weeps alone for pleasures not to be ;

Sorely she wept until the night came on,  
And then, instead of love, O misery !

She brooded o'er the luxury alone :

His image in the dusk she seem'd to see,

And to the silence made a gentle moan,  
Spreading her perfect arms upon the air,           239  
And on her couch low murmuring "Where? O where?"

## XXXI.

But Selfishness, Love's cousin, held not long

Its fiery vigil in her single breast ;

She fretted for the golden hour, and hung

Upon the time with feverish unrest—

Not long—for soon into her heart a throng

Of higher occupants, a richer zest,

Came tragic ; passion not to be subdued,

And sorrow for her love in travels rude.



## XXXII.

In the mid days of autumn, on their eves  
The breath of Winter comes from far away, 250  
And the sick west continually bereaves  
Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay  
Of death among the bushes and the leaves  
To make all bare before he dares to stray  
From his north cavern. So sweet Isabel  
By gradual decay from beauty fell,

## XXXIII.

Because Lorenzo came not. Oftentimes  
She ask'd her brothers, with an eye all pale,  
Striving to be itself, what dungeon climes  
Could keep him off so long? They spake a tale 260  
Time after time, to quiet her. Their crimes  
Came on them, like a smoke from Hinnom's vale;  
And every night in dreams they groan'd aloud,  
To see their sister in her snowy shroud.

## XXXIV.

And she had died in drowsy ignorance,

But for a thing more deadly dark than all ;

It came like a fierce potion, drunk by chance,

Which saves a sick man from the feather'd pall

For some few gasping moments ; like a lance,

Waking an Indian from his cloudy hall 270

With cruel pierce, and bringing him again

Sense of the gnawing fire at heart and brain.

## XXXV.

It was a vision.—In the drowsy gloom,

The dull of midnight, at her couch's foot

Lorenzo stood, and wept : the forest tomb

Had marr'd his glossy hair which once could shoot

Lustre into the sun, and put cold doom

Upon his lips, and taken the soft lute

From his lorn voice, and past his loamed ears

Had made a miry channel for his tears. 280

## XXXVI.

Strange sound it was, when the pale shadow spake ;  
For there was striving, in its piteous tongue,  
To speak as when on earth it was awake,  
And Isabella on its music hung :  
Languor there was in it, and tremulous shake,  
As in a palsied Druid's harp unstrung ;  
And through it moan'd a ghostly under-song,  
Like hoarse night-gusts sepulchral briars among.

## XXXVII.

Its eyes, though wild, were still all dewy bright  
With love, and kept all phantom fear aloof 290  
From the poor girl by magic of their light,  
The while it did unthread the horrid woof  
Of the late darken'd time,—the murderous spite  
Of pride and avarice,—the dark pine roof  
In the forest,—and the sodden turfed dell,  
Where, without any word, from stabs he fell.

## XXXVIII.

Saying moreover, " Isabel, my sweet !

" Red whortle-berries droop above my head,  
" And a large flint-stone weighs upon my feet ;  
" Around me beeches and high chestnuts shed 300  
" Their leaves and prickly nuts ; a sheep-fold bleat  
" Comes from beyond the river to my bed :  
" Go, shed one tear upon my heather-bloom,  
" And it shall comfort me within the tomb.

## XXXIX.

" I am a shadow now, alas ! alas !  
" Upon the skirts of human-nature dwelling  
" Alone : I chant alone the holy mass,  
" While little sounds of life are round me knelling,  
" And glossy bees at noon do fieldward pass,  
" And many a chapel bell the hour is telling, 310  
" Paining me through : those sounds grow strange to me,  
" And thou art distant in Humanity.

## XL.

“ I know what was, I feel full well what is,  
“ And I should rage, if spirits could go mad ;  
“ Though I forget the taste of earthly bliss,  
“ That paleness warms my grave, as though I had  
“ A Seraph chosen from the bright abyss  
“ To be my spouse : thy paleness makes me glad ;  
“ Thy beauty grows upon me, and I feel  
“ A greater love through all my essence steal.” 320

## XLI.

The Spirit mourn'd “ Adieu ! ”—dissolv'd, and left  
The atom darkness in a slow turmoil ;  
As when of healthful midnight sleep bereft,  
Thinking on rugged hours and fruitless toil,  
We put our eyes into a pillowy cleft,  
And see the spangly gloom froth up and boil :  
It made sad Isabella's eyelids ache,  
And in the dawn she started up awake ;

## XLII.

"Ha! ha!" said she, "I knew not this hard life,  
 "I thought the worst was simple misery;      330  
 "I thought some Fate with pleasure or with strife  
 "Portion'd us—happy days, or else to die;  
 "But there is crime—a brother's bloody knife!  
 "Sweet Spirit, thou hast school'd my infancy:  
 "I'll visit thee for this, and kiss thine eyes,  
 "And greet thee morn and even in the skies."

## XLIII.

When the full morning came, she had devised  
 How she might secret to the forest lie;  
 How she might find the clay, so dearly prized,  
 And sing to it one latest lullaby;      340  
 How her short absence might be unsurmised,  
 While she the inmost of the dream would try.  
 Resolv'd, she took with her an aged nurse,  
 And went into that dismal forest-hearse.

## XLIV.

See, as they creep along the river side,  
 How she doth whisper to that aged Dame,  
 And, after looking round the champaign wide,  
 Shows her a knife.—“What feverous hectic flame  
 “Burns in thee, child?—What good can thee betide,  
 “That thou should’st smile again?”—The evening  
     came, 350

And they had found Lorenzo’s earthy bed;  
 The flint was there, the berries at his head.

## XLV.

Who hath not loiter’d in a green church-yard,  
 And let his spirit, like a demon-mole,  
 Work through the clayey soil and gravel hard,  
 To see scull, coffin’d bones, and funeral stole;  
 Pitying each form that hungry Death hath marr’d,  
 And filling it once more with human soul?  
 Ah! this is holiday to what was felt  
 When Isabella by Lorenzo knelt. 360

## XLVI.

She gaz'd into the fresh-thrown mould, as though  
One glance did fully all its secrets tell ;  
Clearly she saw, as other eyes would know  
Pale limbs at bottom of a crystal well ;  
Upon the murderous spot she seem'd to grow,  
Like to a native lily of the dell :  
Then with her knife, all sudden, she began  
To dig more fervently than misers can.

## XLVII.

Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove, whereon  
Her silk had play'd in purple phantasies,      370  
She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than stone,  
And put it in her bosom, where it dries  
And freezes utterly unto the bone  
Those dainties made to still an infant's cries :  
Then 'gan she work again ; nor stay'd her care,  
But to throw back at times her veiling hair.



## XLVIII.

That old nurse stood beside her wondering,  
    Until her heart felt pity to the core  
At sight of such a dismal labouring,  
    And so she kneeled, with her locks all hoar, 380  
And put her lean hands to the horrid thing :  
    Three hours they labour'd at this travail sore ;  
At last they felt the kernel of the grave,  
And Isabella did not stamp and rave.

## XLIX.

Ah ! wherefore all this wormy circumstance ?  
    Why linger at the yawning tomb so long ?  
O for the gentleness of old Romance,  
    The simple plaining of a minstrel's song !  
Fair reader, at the old tale take a glance,  
    For here, in truth, it doth not well belong 390  
To speak :—O turn thee to the very tale,  
And taste the music of that vision pale.

## L.

With duller steel than the Perséan sword

They cut away no formless monster's head,

But one, whose gentleness did well accord

With death, as life. The ancient harps have said,  
Love never dies, but lives, immortal Lord :

If Love impersonate was ever dead,  
Pale Isabella kiss'd it, and low moan'd.

'Twas love ; cold,—dead indeed, but not dethroned. 400

## LI.

In anxious secrecy they took it home,

And then the prize was all for Isabel :

She calm'd its wild hair with a golden comb,

And all around each eye's sepulchral cell  
Pointed each fringed lash ; the smeared loam

With tears, as chilly as a dripping well,  
She drench'd away :—and still she comb'd, and kept  
Sighing all day—and still she kiss'd, and wept.

## LII.

Then in a silken scarf,—sweet with the dews  
Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby, 410  
And divine liquids come with odorous ooze  
Through the cold serpent-pipe refreshfully,—  
She wrapp'd it up; and for its tomb did choose  
A garden-pot, wherein she laid it by,  
And cover'd it with mould, and o'er it set  
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever wet.

## LIII.

And she forgot the stars, the moon, and sun,  
And she forgot the blue above the trees,  
And she forgot the dells where waters run,  
And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze; 420  
She had no knowledge when the day was done,  
And the new morn she saw not: but in peace  
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,  
And moisten'd it with tears unto the core.

## LIV.

And so she ever fed it with thin tears,

Whence thick, and green, and beautiful it grew,  
So that it smelt more balmy than its peers

Of Basil-tufts in Florence; for it drew  
Nurture besides, and life, from human fears,

From the fast mouldering head there shut from view:  
So that the jewel, safely casketed, 431  
Came forth, and in perfumed leafits spread.

## LV.

O Melancholy, linger here awhile!

O Music, Music, breathe despondingly!

O Echo, Echo, from some sombre isle,

Unknown, Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh!

Spirits in grief, lift up your heads, and smile;

Lift up your heads, sweet Spirits, heavily,  
And make a pale light in your cypress glooms,  
Tinting with silver wan your marble tombs. 440

## LVI.

Moan hither, all ye syllables of woe,  
From the deep throat of sad Melpomene !  
Through bronzed lyre in tragic order go,  
And touch the strings into a mystery ;  
Sound mournfully upon the winds and low ;  
For simple Isabel is soon to be  
Among the dead : She withers, like a palm  
Cut by an Indian for its juicy balm.

## LVII.

O leave the palm to wither by itself ;  
Let not quick Winter chill its dying hour !— 450  
It may not be—those Bæalites of pelf,  
Her brethren, noted the continual shower  
From her dead eyes ; and many a curious elf,  
Among her kindred, wonder'd that such dower  
Of youth and beauty should be thrown aside  
By one mark'd out to be a Noble's bride.

## LVIII.

And, furthermore, her brethren wonder'd much

Why she sat drooping by the Basil green,  
And why it flourish'd, as by magic touch ;

Greatly they wonder'd what the thing might mean :  
They could not surely give belief, that such 461

A very nothing would have power to wean  
Her from her own fair youth, and pleasures gay,  
And even remembrance of her love's delay.

## LIX.

Therefore they watch'd a time when they might sift

This hidden whim ; and long they watch'd in vain ;  
For seldom did she go to chapel-shrift,

And seldom felt she any hunger-pain ;  
And when she left, she hurried back, as swift

As bird on wing to breast its eggs again ; 470  
And, patient as a hen-bird, sat her there  
Beside her Basil, weeping through her hair.

## LX.

Yet they contriv'd to steal the Basil-pot,  
And to examine it in secret place :  
The thing was vile with green and livid spot,  
And yet they knew it was Lorenzo's face :  
The guerdon of their murder they had got,  
And so left Florence in a moment's space,  
Never to turn again.—Away they went,  
With blood upon their heads, to banishment. 480

## LXI.

O Melancholy, turn thine eyes away !  
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly !  
O Echo, Echo, on some other day,  
From isles Lethean, sigh to us—O sigh !  
Spirits of grief, sing not your “ Well-a-way ! ”  
For Isabel, sweet Isabel, will die ;  
Will die a death too lone and incomplete,  
Now they have ta'en away her Basil sweet.

## LXII.

Piteous she look'd on dead and senseless things,  
 Asking for her lost Basil amorously ;                    490  
 And with melodious chuckle in the strings  
 Of her lorn voice, she oftentimes would cry  
 After the Pilgrim in his wanderings,  
 To ask him where her Basil was ; and why  
 Twas hid from her : " For cruel 'tis," said she,  
 " To steal my Basil-pot away from me."

## LXIII.

And so she pined, and so she died forlorn,  
 Imploring for her Basil to the last.  
 No heart was there in Florence but did mourn  
 In pity of her love, so overcast.                    500  
 And a sad ditty of this story born  
 From mouth to mouth through all the country pass'd:  
 Still is the burthen sung—" O cruelty,  
 " To steal my Basil-pot away from me !"



THE  
EVE OF ST. AGNES.



THE  
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I.

St. Agnes' Eve—Ah, bitter chill it was!  
The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;  
The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,  
And silent was the flock in woolly fold:  
Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told  
His rosary, and while his frosted breath,  
Like pious incense from a censer old,  
Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,  
Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

## II.

His prayer he saith, this patient, holy man ; 10  
Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,  
And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,  
Along the chapel aisle by slow degrees :  
The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to freeze,  
Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails :  
Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,  
He passeth by ; and his weak spirit fails  
To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

## III.

Northward he turneth through a little door,  
And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden-tongue 20  
Flatter'd to tears this aged man and poor ;  
But no—already had his deathbell rung ;  
The joys of all his life were said and sung :  
His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve :  
Another way he went, and soon among  
Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,  
And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.

## IV.

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft ;  
And so it chanc'd, for many a door was wide,  
From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,           30  
The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide :  
The level chambers, ready with their pride,  
Were glowing to receive a thousand guests :  
The carved angels, ever eager-eyed,  
Star'd, where upon their heads the cornice rests,  
With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on their  
          breasts.

## V.

At length burst in the argent revelry,  
With plume, tiara, and all rich array,  
Numerous as shadows haunting fairily  
The brain, new stuff'd, in youth, with triumphs gay 40  
Of old romance. These let us wish away,  
And turn, sole-thoughted, to one Lady there,  
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,  
On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly care,  
As she had heard old dames full many times declare.



## VIII.

She danc'd along with vague, regardless eyes,  
Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short :  
The hallow'd hour was near at hand : she sighs  
Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd resort  
Of whisperers in anger, or in sport ;  
'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,  
Hoodwink'd with faery fancy ; all amort, 70  
Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,  
And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

## IX.

So, purposing each moment to retire,  
She linger'd still. Meantime, across the moors,  
Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire  
For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,  
Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he, and implores  
All saints to give him sight of Madeline,  
But for one moment in the tedious hours,  
That he might gaze and worship all unseen ; 80  
Perchance speak, kneel, touch, kiss—in sooth such things  
have been.

## X.

He ventures in : let no buzz'd whisper tell :  
All eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords  
Will storm his heart, Love's fev'rous citadel :  
For him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,  
Hyena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,  
Whose very dogs would execrations howl  
Against his lineage : not one breast affords  
Him any mercy, in that mansion foul,  
Save one old beldame, weak in body and in soul. 90

## XI.

Ah, happy chance ! the aged creature came,  
Shuffling along with ivory-headed wand,  
To where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,  
Behind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond  
The sound of merriment and chorus bland :  
He startled her ; but soon she knew his face,  
And grasp'd his fingers in her palsied hand,  
Saying, "Mercy, Porphyro ! hie thee from this place ;  
"They are all here to-night, the whole blood-thirsty race!



## XII.

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish Hildebrand;  
 "He had a fever late, and in the fit 101  
 "He cursed thee and thine, both house and land:  
 "Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit  
 "More tame for his gray hairs—Alas me! flit!  
 "Flit like a ghost away."—"Ah, Gossip dear,  
 "We're safe enough; here in this arm-chair sit,  
 "And tell me how"—"Good Saints! no there, no there;  
 "Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy bier."

## XIII.

He follow'd through a lowly arched way,  
 Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume, 110  
 And as she mutter'd "Well-a—well-a-day!"  
 He found him in a little moonlight room,  
 Pale, lattic'd, chill, and silent as a tomb.  
 "Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,  
 "O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom  
 "Which none but secret sisterhood may see,  
 "When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving piously."

## XIV.

“ St. Agnes ! Ah ! it is St. Agnes’ Eve—  
 “ Yet men will murder upon holy days :  
 “ Thou must hold water in a witch’s sieve,    120  
 “ And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,  
 “ To venture so : it fills me with amaze  
 “ To see thee, Porphyro !—St. Agnes’ Eve !  
 “ God’s help ! my lady fair the conjuror plays  
 “ This very night : good angels her deceive !  
 “ But let me laugh awhile, I’ve mickle time to grieve.”

## XV.

Feebly she laugheth in the languid moon,  
 While Porphyro upon her face doth look,  
 Like puzzled urchin on an aged crone  
 Who keepeth clos’d a wond’rous riddle-book,    130  
 As spectacl’d she sits in chimney nook.  
 But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told  
 His lady’s purpose ; and he scarce could brook  
 Tears, at the thought of those enchantments cold  
 And Madeline asleep in lap of legends old.

## XVI.

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,  
 Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart  
 Made purple riot: then doth he propose  
 A stratagem, that makes the beldame start:  
 "A cruel man and impious thou art: 140  
 "Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and dream  
 "Alone with her good angels, far apart  
 "From wicked men like thee. Go, go!—I deem  
 "Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst seem."

## XVII.

"I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,"  
 Quoth Porphyro: "O may I ne'er find grace  
 "When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer,  
 "If one of her soft ringlets I displace,  
 "Or look with ruffian passion in her face:  
 "Good Angela, believe me by these tears; 150  
 "Or I will, even in a moment's space,  
 "Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,  
 "And beard them, though they be more fang'd than  
 wolves and bears."

## XVIII.

" Ah ! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul ?  
 " A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard thing,  
 " Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll ;  
 " Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,  
 " Were never miss'd."—Thus plaining, doth she bring  
 A gentler speech from burning Porphyro ;  
 So woful, and of such deep sorrowing,                    160  
 That Angela gives promise she will do  
 Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

## XIX.

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,  
 Even to Madeline's chamber, and there hide  
 Him in a closet, of such privacy  
 That he might see her beauty unespied,  
 And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,  
 While legion'd fairies pac'd the coverlet,  
 And pale enchantment held her sleepy-eyed.  
 Never on such a night have lovers met,                    170  
 Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

## XX.

“ It shall be as thou wishest,” said the Dame :  
“ All cates and dainties shall be stored there  
“ Quickly on this feast-night : by the tambour frame  
“ Her own lute thou wilt see : no time to spare,  
“ For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare  
“ On such a catering trust my dizzy head.  
“ Wait here, my child, with patience ; kneel in prayer  
“ The while : Ah ! thou must needs the lady wed,  
“ Or may I never leave my grave among the dead.” 180

## XXI.

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.  
The lover's endless minutes slowly pass'd ;  
The dame return'd, and whisper'd in his ear  
To follow her ; with aged eyes aghast  
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,  
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain  
The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd, and chaste ;  
Where Porphyro took covert, pleas'd amain.  
His poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain

## XXII.

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,                   190  
 Old Angela was feeling for the stair,  
 When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed maid,  
 Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware :  
 With silver taper's light, and pious care,  
 She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led  
 To a safe level matting. Now prepare,  
 Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed ;  
 She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray'd and fled.

## XXIII.

Out went the taper as she hurried in ;  
 Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died :   200  
 She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin  
 To spirits of the air, and visions wide :  
 No uttered syllable, or, woe betide !  
 But to her heart, her heart was voluble,  
 Paining with eloquence her balmy side ;  
 As though a tongueless nightingale should swell  
 Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

## XXIV.

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,  
All garlanded with carven imag'ries  
Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass, 210  
And diamonded with panes of quaint device,  
Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,  
As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;  
And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,  
And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,  
A shielded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and  
kings.

## XXV.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,  
And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,  
As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;  
Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest, 220  
And on her silver cross soft amethyst,  
And on her hair a glory, like a saint:  
She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,  
Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint:  
She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

## XXVI.

Anon his heart revives : her vespers done,  
 Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees ;  
 Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one ;  
 Loosens her fragrant boddice ; by degrees  
 Her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees : 230  
 Half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,  
 Pensive awhile she dreams awake, and sees,  
 In fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,  
 But dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

## XXVII.

Soon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,  
 In sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,  
 Until the poppi'd warmth of sleep oppress'd  
 Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away ;  
 Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day ;  
 Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain ; 240  
 Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray :  
 Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,  
 As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.



## XXVIII.

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,  
 Porphyro gazed upon her empty dress,  
 And listen'd to her breathing, if it chanced  
 To wake into a slumberous tenderness ;  
 Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,  
 And breath'd himself : then from the closet crept,  
 Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,        250  
 And over the hush'd carpet, silent, stept,  
 And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where, lo !—how fast  
       she slept.

## XXIX.

Then by the bed-side, where the faded moon  
 Made a dim, silver twilight, soft he set  
 A table, and, half anguish'd, threw thereon  
 A cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet :—  
 O for some drowsy Morphean amulet !  
 The boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,  
 The kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,  
 Affray his ears, though but in dying tone :— 260  
 The hall door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

## XXX.

And still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,  
 In blanched linen, smooth, and lavender'd,  
 While he from forth the closet brought a heap  
 Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd  
 With jellies soother than the creamy curd,  
 And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon;  
 Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd  
 From Fez; and spiced dainties, every one,  
 From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon. 270

## XXXI.

These delicacies he heap'd with glowing hand  
 On golden dishes and in baskets bright  
 Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they stand  
 In the retired quiet of the night,  
 Filling the chilly room with perfume light.—  
 “And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!  
 “Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:  
 “Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,  
 “Or I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache.”

## XXXII.

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved arm      280  
 Sank in her pillow. Shaded was her dream  
 By the dusk curtains :—'twas a midnight charm  
 Impossible to melt as iced stream :  
 The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam ;  
 Broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies :  
 It seem'd he never, never could redeem  
 From such a stedfast spell his lady's eyes ;  
 So mus'd awhile, entoil'd in woofed phantasies.

## XXXIII.

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute,—  
 Tumultuous,—and, in chords that tenderest be, 290  
 He play'd an ancient ditty, long since mute,  
 In Provence call'd, “ La belle dame sans mercy : ”  
 Close to her ear touching the melody ;—  
 Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft moan :  
 He ceased—she panted quick—and suddenly  
 Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone :  
 Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured stone.

## XXXIV.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,  
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep :  
There was a painful change, that nigh expell'd 300  
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep  
At which fair Madeline began to weep,  
And moan forth witless words with many a sigh ;  
While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep ;  
Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous eye,  
Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so dreamingly.

## XXXV.

“ Ah, Porphyro ! ” said she, “ but even now  
“ Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,  
“ Made tuneable with every sweetest vow ; 309  
“ And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear :  
“ How chang'd thou art ! how pallid, chill, and drear !  
“ Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,  
“ Those looks immortal, those complainings dear !  
“ Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,  
“ For if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go.”

## XXXVI.

Beyond a mortal man impassion'd far  
 At these voluptuous accents, he arose,  
 Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing star  
 Seen mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose  
 Into her dream he melted, as the rose           320  
 Blendeth its odour with the violet,—  
 Solution sweet: meantime the frost-wind blows  
 Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet  
 Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon hath set.

## XXXVII.

'Tis dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet:  
 "This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"  
 'Tis dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:  
 "No dream, alas! alas! and woe is mine!  
 "Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine.—  
 "Cruel! what traitor could thee hither bring? 330  
 "I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine  
 "Though thou forsakest a deceived thing;—  
 "A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing."

## XXXVIII.

“ My Madeline ! sweet dreamer ! lovely bride !

“ Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest ?

“ Thy beauty's shield, heart-shap'd and vermeildyed ?

“ Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest

“ After so many hours of toil and quest,

“ A famish'd pilgrim,—saved by miracle.

“ Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest 340

“ Saving of thy sweet self ; if thou think'st well

“ To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.”

## XXXIX.

“ Hark ! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,

“ Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed :

“ Arise—arise ! the morning is at hand ;—

“ The bloated wassaillers will never heed :—

“ Let us away, my love, with happy speed ;

“ There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see,—

“ Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead :

“ Awake ! arise ! my love, and fearless be, 350

“ For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee.”

## XL.

She hurried at his words, beset with fears,  
For there were sleeping dragons all around,  
At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears—  
Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found.—  
In all the house was heard no human sound.  
A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each door ;  
The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,  
Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar ;  
And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor. 360

## XLI.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall ;  
Like phantoms, to the iron porch, they glide ;  
Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,  
With a huge empty flaggon by his side :  
The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,  
But his sagacious eye an inmate owns :  
By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide :—  
The chains lie silent on the footworn stones ;—  
The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

## XLII.

And they are gone : ay, ages long ago                    370  
These lovers fled away into the storm.  
That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,  
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form  
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,  
Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the old  
Died palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform ;  
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,  
For aye unsought for slept among his ashes cold.



POEMS.



## POEMS.

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### ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

#### 1.

MY heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains  
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,  
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains  
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk :  
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,  
But being too happy in thine happiness,—  
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,  
In some melodious plot  
Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,  
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

## 2.

O, for a draught of vintage ! that hath been  
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,  
Tasting of Flora and the country green,  
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth !  
O for a beaker full of the warm South,  
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,  
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,  
And purple-stained mouth ;  
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,  
And with thee fade away into the forest dim : 20

## 3.

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
What thou among the leaves hast never known,  
The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;  
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,

Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies ;  
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow  
And leaden-eyed despairs,  
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow. 39

## 4.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,  
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,  
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards :  
Already with thee! tender is the night,  
And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,  
Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays ;  
But here there is no light,  
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown  
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy  
ways. 40

## 5.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,  
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet  
Wherewith the seasonable month endows  
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild ;  
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine ;  
Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves ;  
And mid-May's eldest child,  
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,  
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves. 50

## 6.

Darkling I listen ; and, for many a time  
I have been half in love with easeful Death,  
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,  
To take into the air my quiet breath ;  
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,

To cease upon the midnight with no pain,  
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad  
In such an ecstasy!  
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—  
To thy high requiem become a sod. 60

## 7.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!  
No hungry generations tread thee down;  
The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path  
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;  
The same that oft-times hath  
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn. 70

## 8.

Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell

To toll me back from thee to my sole self !

Adieu ! the fancy cannot cheat so well

As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.

Adieu ! adieu ! thy plaintive anthem fades

Past the near meadows, over the still stream,

Up the hill-side ; and now 'tis buried deep

In the next valley-glades :

Was it a vision, or a waking dream ?

Fled is that music :—Do I wake or sleep ? 80



## ODE ON A GRECIAN URN.

## 1.

THOU still unravish'd bride of quietness,

Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,

Sylvan historian, who canst thus express

A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme :

What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape

Of deities or mortals, or of both,

In Tempe or the dales of Arcady ?

What men or gods are these ? What maidens loth ?

What mad pursuit ? What struggle to escape ?

What pipes and timbrels ? What wild ecstasy ? 10

## 2.

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,  
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:  
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave  
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;  
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,  
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;  
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,  
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair! 20

## 3.

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed  
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;  
And, happy melodist, unwearied,  
For ever piping songs for ever new;

More happy love ! more happy, happy love !  
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,  
For ever panting, and for ever young ;  
All breathing human passion far above,  
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,  
A burning forehead, and a parching tongue. 30

## 4.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice ?  
To what green altar, O mysterious priest,  
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,  
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest ?  
What little town by river or sea shore,  
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,  
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn ?  
And, little town, thy streets for evermore  
Will silent be ; and not a soul to tell  
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

## 5.

O Attic shape ! Fair attitude ! with brede  
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,  
With forest branches and the trodden weed ;  
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought  
As doth eternity : Cold Pastoral !  
When old age shall this generation waste,  
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe  
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,  
“ Beauty is truth, truth beauty,”—that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know. 50

## ODE TO PSYCHE.

O GODDESS! hear these tuneless numbers, wrung  
By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear,  
And pardon that thy secrets should be sung  
Even into thine own soft-conched ear:  
Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see  
The winged Psyche with awaken'd eyes?  
I wander'd in a forest thoughtlessly,  
And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,  
Saw two fair creatures, couched side by side  
In deepest grass, beneath the whisp'ring roof 10  
Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where there ran  
A brooklet, scarce espied:

Mid hush'd, cool-rooted flowers, fragrant-eyed,  
Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian,  
They lay calm-breathing on the bedded grass ;  
Their arms embraced, and their pinions too ;  
Their lips touch'd not, but had not bade adieu,  
As if disjoined by soft-handed slumber,  
And ready still past kisses to outnumber  
At tender eye-dawn of aurorean love :                   20  
    The winged boy I knew ;  
But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove ?  
    His Psyche true !

O latest born and loveliest vision far  
Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy !  
Fairer than Phœbe's sapphire-region'd star,  
Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the sky ;  
Fairer than these, though temple thou hast none,  
Nor altar heap'd with flowers ;

Nor virgin-choir to make delicious moan 30

Upon the midnight hours ;

No voice, no lute, no pipe, no incense sweet

From chain-swung censer teeming ;

No shrine, no grove, no oracle, no heat

Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

O brightest ! though too late for antique vows,

Too, too late for the fond believing lyre,

When holy were the haunted forest boughs,

Holy the air, the water, and the fire ;

Yet even in these days so far retir'd 40

From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,

Fluttering among the faint Olympians,

I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspired.

So let me be thy choir, and make a moan

Upon the midnight hours ;

Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense sweet  
From swung censer teeming ;  
Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy heat  
Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane           50  
In some untrodden region of my mind,  
Where branched thoughts, new grown with pleasant  
    pain,  
    Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind :  
Far, far around shall those dark-cluster'd trees  
    Fledge the wild-ridged mountains steep by steep ;  
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,  
    The moss-lain Dryads shall be lull'd to sleep ;  
And in the midst of this wide quietness  
A rosy sanctuary will I dress  
With the wreath'd trellis of a working brain,       60  
    With buds, and bells, and stars without a name,



With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,  
Who breeding flowers, will never breed the same :  
And there shall be for thee all soft delight  
That shadowy thought can win,  
A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,  
To let the warm Love in !

## FANCY.

EVER let the Fancy roam,  
Pleasure never is at home :  
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth,  
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth ;  
Then let winged Fancy wander  
Through the thought still spread beyond her :  
Open wide the mind's cage-door,  
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.  
O sweet Fancy ! let her loose ;  
Summer's joys are spoilt by use, 10  
And the enjoying of the Spring  
Fades as does its blossoming ;  
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,  
Blushing through the mist and dew,

Cloys with tasting : What do then ?  
Sit thee by the ingle, when  
The sear faggot blazes bright,  
Spirit of a winter's night ;  
When the soundless earth is muffled,  
And the caked snow is shuffled 20  
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon ;  
When the Night doth meet the Noon  
In a dark conspiracy  
To banish Even from her sky.  
Sit thee there, and send abroad,  
With a mind self-overaw'd,  
Fancy, high-commission'd :—send her !  
She has vassals to attend her :  
She will bring, in spite of frost,  
Beauties that the earth hath lost ; 30  
She will bring thee, all together,  
All delights of summer weather ;

All the buds and bells of May,  
From dewy sward or thorny spray  
All the heaped Autumn's wealth,  
With a still, mysterious stealth :  
She will mix these pleasures up  
Like three fit wines in a cup,  
And thou shalt quaff it :—thou shalt hear  
Distant harvest-carols clear ; 40  
Rustle of the reaped corn ;  
Sweet birds antheming the morn :  
And, in the same moment—hark !  
'Tis the early April lark,  
Or the rooks, with busy caw,  
Foraging for sticks and straw.  
Thou shalt, at one glance, behold  
The daisy and the marigold ;  
White-plum'd lilies, and the first  
Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst ; 50

Shaded hyacinth, alway  
Sapphire queen of the mid-May ;  
And every leaf, and every flower  
Pearled with the self-same shower.  
Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep  
Meagre from its celled sleep ;  
And the snake all winter-thin  
Cast on sunny bank its skin ;  
Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see  
Hatching in the hawthorn-tree,  
When the hen-bird's wing doth rest  
Quiet on her mossy nest ;  
Then the hurry and alarm  
When the bee-hive casts its swarm ;  
Acorns ripe down-pattering,  
While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy ! let her loose ;  
Every thing is spoilt by use :  
Where's the cheek that doth not fade,  
Too much gaz'd at ? Where's the maid 70  
Whose lip mature is ever new ?  
Where's the eye, however blue,  
Doth not weary ? Where's the face  
One would meet in every place ?  
Where's the voice, however soft,  
One would hear so very oft ?  
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth  
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth.  
Let, then, winged Fancy find  
Thee a mistress to thy mind : 80  
Dulcet-eyed as Ceres' daughter,  
Ere the God of Torment taught her  
How to frown and how to chide ;  
With a waist and with a side



## ODE.

BARDS of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth !  
Have ye souls in heaven too,  
Double-lived in regions new ?  
Yes, and those of heaven commune  
With the spheres of sun and moon ;  
With the noise of fountains wond'rous,  
And the parle of voices thund'rous ;  
With the whisper of heaven's trees  
And one another, in soft ease  
Seated on Elysian lawns  
Brows'd by none but Dian's fawns  
Underneath large blue-bells tented,  
Where the daisies are rose-scented,



And the rose herself has got  
Perfume which on earth is not ;  
Where the nightingale doth sing  
Not a senseless, tranced thing.  
But divine melodious truth ;  
Philosophic numbers smooth ;                    20  
Tales and golden histories  
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then  
On the earth ye live again ;  
And the souls ye left behind you  
Teach us, here, the way to find you,  
Where your other souls are joying,  
Never slumber'd, never cloying.  
Here, your earth-born souls still speak  
To mortals, of their little week ;                    30

Of their sorrows and delights ;  
Of their passions and their spites ;  
Of their glory and their shame ;  
What doth strengthen and what maim.  
Thus ye teach us, every day,  
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth !  
Ye have souls in heaven too,  
Double-lived in regions new !

## LINES

ON

## THE MERMAID TAVERN.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?  
Have ye tippled drink more fine  
Than mine host's Canary wine?  
Or are fruits of Paradise  
Sweeter than those dainty pies  
Of venison? O generous food!  
Drest as though bold Robin Hood      10  
Would, with his maid Marian,  
Sup and bowse from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day  
Mine host's sign-board flew away,  
Nobody knew whither, till  
An astrologer's old quill  
To a sheepskin gave the story,  
Said he saw you in your glory,  
Underneath a new old-sign  
Sipping beverage divine, 20  
And pledging with contented smack  
The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern,  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern ?

## ROBIN HOOD.

TO A FRIEND.

No! those days are gone away,  
And their hours are old and gray,  
And their minutes buried all  
Under the down-trodden pall  
Of the leaves of many years:  
Many times have winter's shears,  
Frozen North, and chilling East,  
Sounded tempests to the feast  
Of the forest's whispering fleeces,  
Since men knew nor rent nor leases. 10

No, the bugle sounds no more,  
And the twanging bow no more;

Silent is the ivory shrill  
Past the heath and up the hill ;  
There is no mid-forest laugh,  
Where lone Echo gives the half  
To some wight, amaz'd to hear  
Jesting, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June  
You may go, with sun or moon, 20  
Or the seven stars to light you,  
Or the polar ray to right you ;  
But you never may behold  
Little John, or Robin bold ;  
Never one, of all the clan,  
Thrumming on an empty can  
Some old hunting ditty, while  
He doth his green way beguile  
To fair hostess Merriment,  
Down beside the pasture Trent ; 30

For he left the merry tale  
Messenger for spicy ale.

Gone, the merry morris din ;  
Gone, the song of Gamelyn ;  
Gone, the tough-belted outlaw  
Idling in the "grenè shawe ;"  
All are gone away and past !  
And if Robin should be cast  
Sudden from his turfed grave,  
And if Marian should have 40  
Once again her forest days,  
She would weep, and he would craze :  
He would swear, for all his oaks,  
Fall'n beneath the dockyard strokes,  
Have rotted on the briny seas ;  
She would weep that her wild bees  
Sang not to her—strange ! that honey  
Can't be got without hard money !

So it is: yet let us sing,  
Honour to the old bow-string! 50  
Honour to the bugle-horn!  
Honour to the woods unshorn!  
Honour to the Lincoln green!  
Honour to the archer keen!  
Honour to tight little John,  
And the horse he rode upon!  
Honour to bold Robin Hood,  
Sleeping in the underwood!  
Honour to maid Marian,  
And to all the Sherwood-clan! 60  
Though their days have hurried by  
Let us two a burden try.



## TO AUTUMN.

## 1.

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun ;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run ;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core ;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel ; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease, 10  
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

## 2.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store ?

Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find

Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,

Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ;

Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,

Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook

Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers :

And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep

Steady thy laden head across a brook ;                    20

Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,

Thou watchest the last oozyngs hours by hours.

## 3.

Where are the songs of Spring ? Ay, where are they ?

Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—

While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,

And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue :

Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn  
Among the river shallows, borne aloft  
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies ;  
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ; 30  
Hedge-crickets sing ; and now with treble soft  
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft ;  
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

## ODE ON MELANCHOLY.

## 1.

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist  
Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its poisonous wine ;  
Nor suffer thy pale forehead to be kiss'd  
By nightshade, ruby grape of Proserpine ;  
Make not your rosary of yew-berries,  
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be  
Your mournful Psyche, nor the downy owl  
A partner in your sorrow's mysteries ;  
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,  
And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul. 16

## 2.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall  
    Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,  
That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,  
    And hides the green hill in an April shroud ;  
Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,  
    Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,  
    Or on the wealth of globed peonies ;  
Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,  
    Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,  
    And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes. 20

## 3.

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die ;  
    And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips  
Bidding adieu ; and aching Pleasure nigh,  
    Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips :

Ay, in the very temple of Delight

Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,

Though seen of none save him whose strenuous  
tongue

Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine ;

His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,

And be among her cloudy trophies hung. 30

# HYPERION.

A FRAGMENT.





# HYPERION.

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## BOOK I.

DEEP in the shady sadness of a vale  
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,  
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,  
Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,  
Still as the silence round about his lair ;  
Forest on forest hung about his head  
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,  
Not so much life as on a summer's day  
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,  
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest. 10

A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more  
By reason of his fallen divinity  
Spreading a shade : the Naiad 'mid her reeds  
Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

Along the margin-sand large foot-marks went,  
No further than to where his feet had stray'd,  
And slept there since. Upon the sodden ground  
His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,  
Unceptred ; and his realmless eyes were closed ;  
While his bow'd head seem'd list'ning to the Earth, 20  
His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

It seem'd no force could wake him from his place ;  
But there came one, who with a kindred hand  
Touch'd his wide shoulders, after bending low  
With reverence, though to one who knew it not.  
She was a Goddess of the infant world ;

By her in stature the tall Amazon  
Had stood a pigmy's height : she would have ta'en  
Achilles by the hair and bent his neck ;  
Or with a finger stay'd Ixion's wheel. 30  
Her face was large as that of Memphian sphinx,  
Pedestal'd haply in a palace court,  
When sages look'd to Egypt for their lore.  
But oh ! how unlike marble was that face :  
How beautiful, if sorrow had not made  
Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.  
There was a listening fear in her regard,  
As if calamity had but begun ;  
As if the vanward clouds of evil days  
Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear 40  
Was with its stored thunder labouring up.  
One hand she press'd upon that aching spot  
Where beats the human heart, as if just there,  
Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain :

The other upon Saturn's bended neck  
She laid, and to the level of his ear  
Leaning with parted lips, some words she spake  
In solemn tenour and deep organ tone :  
Some mourning words, which in our feeble tongue  
Would come in these like accents ; O how frail 50  
To that large utterance of the early Gods !  
“ Saturn, look up !—though wherefore, poor old King?  
“ I have no comfort for thee, no not one :  
“ I cannot say, ‘ O wherefore sleepest thou ? ’  
“ For heaven is parted from thee, and the earth  
“ Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a God ;  
“ And ocean too, with all its solemn noise,  
“ Has from thy sceptre pass'd ; and all the air  
“ Is emptied of thine hoary majesty.  
“ Thy thunder, conscious of the new command, 60  
“ Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house ;  
“ And thy sharp lightning in unpractised hands

“ Scorches and burns our once serene domain.  
“ O aching time ! O moments big as years !  
“ All as ye pass swell out the monstrous truth,  
“ And press it so upon our weary griefs  
“ That unbelief has not a space to breathe.  
“ Saturn, sleep on :—O thoughtless, why did I  
“ Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude ?  
“ Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes ?        70  
“ Saturn, sleep on ! while at thy feet I weep.”

As when, upon a tranced summer-night,  
Those green-rob'd senators of mighty woods,  
Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,  
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,  
Save from one gradual solitary gust  
Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,  
As if the ebbing air had but one wave ;  
So came these words and went ; the while in tears

She touch'd her fair large forehead to the ground, so  
Just where her falling hair might be outspread  
A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet.  
One moon, with alteration slow, had shed  
Her silver seasons four upon the night,  
And still these two were postured motionless,  
Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern ;  
The frozen God still couchant on the earth,  
And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet :  
Until at length old Saturn lifted up  
His faded eyes, and saw his kingdom gone, 90  
And all the gloom and sorrow of the place,  
And that fair kneeling Goddess ; and then spake,  
As with a palsied tongue, and while his beard  
Shook horrid with such aspen-malady :  
“ O tender spouse of gold Hyperion,  
“ Thea, I feel thee ere I see thy face ;  
“ Look up, and let me see our doom in it ;

“ Look up, and tell me if this feeble shape  
“ Is Saturn’s; tell me, if thou hear’st the voice  
“ Of Saturn; tell me, if this wrinkling brow, 100  
“ Naked and bare of its great diadem,  
“ Peers like the front of Saturn. Who had power  
“ To make me desolate? whence came the strength?  
“ How was it nurtur’d to such bursting forth,  
“ While Fate seem’d strangled in my nervous grasp?  
“ But it is so; and I am smother’d up,  
“ And buried from all godlike exercise  
“ Of influence benign on planets pale,  
“ Of admonitions to the winds and seas,  
“ Of peaceful sway above man’s harvesting, 110  
“ And all those acts which Deity supreme  
“ Doth ease its heart of love in.—I am gone  
“ Away from my own bosom: I have left  
“ My strong identity, my real self,  
“ Somewhere between the throne, and where I sit  
“ Here on this spot of earth. Search, Thea, search!

“ Open thine eyes eterne, and sphere them round  
“ Upon all space : space starr'd, and lorn of light ;  
“ Space region'd with life-air ; and barren void ;  
“ Spaces of fire, and all the yawn of hell.— 120  
“ Search, Thea, search ! and tell me, if thou seest  
“ A certain shape or shadow, making way  
“ With wings or chariot fierce to repossess  
“ A heaven he lost erewhile : it must—it must  
“ Be of ripe progress—Saturn must be King.  
“ Yes, there must be a golden victory ;  
“ There must be Gods thrown down, and trumpets blown  
“ Of triumph calm, and hymns of festival  
“ Upon the gold clouds metropolitan,  
“ Voices of soft proclaim, and silver stir 130  
“ Of strings in hollow shells ; and there shall be  
“ Beautiful things made new, for the surprise  
“ Of the sky-children ; I will give command :  
“ Thea ! Thea ! Thea ! where is Saturn ? ”



This passion lifted him upon his feet,  
And made his hands to struggle in the air,  
His Druid locks to shake and ooze with sweat,  
His eyes to fever out, his voice to cease.  
He stood, and heard not Thea's sobbing deep ;  
A little time, and then again he snatch'd 140  
Utterance thus.—“ But cannot I create ?  
“ Cannot I form ? Cannot I fashion forth  
“ Another world, another universe,  
“ To overbear and crumble this to nought ?  
“ Where is another chaos ? Where ? ”—That word  
Found way unto Olympus, and made quake  
The rebel three.—Thea was startled up,  
And in her bearing was a sort of hope,  
As thus she quick-voic'd spake, yet full of awe.

“ This cheers our fallen house : come to our friends, 150  
“ O Saturn ! come away, and give them heart ;

“ I know the covert, for thence came I hither.”  
Thus brief; then with beseeching eyes she went  
With backward footing through the shade a space :  
He follow'd, and she turn'd to lead the way  
Through aged boughs, that yielded like the mist  
Which eagles cleave upmounting from their nest.

Meanwhile in other realms big tears were shed,  
More sorrow like to this, and such like woe,  
Too huge for mortal tongue or pen of scribe : 160  
The Titans fierce, self-hid, or prison-bound,  
Groan'd for the old allegiance once more,  
And listen'd in sharp pain for Saturn's voice.  
But one of the whole mammoth-brood still kept  
His sov'reignty, and rule, and majesty ;—  
Blazing Hyperion on his orb'd fire  
Still sat, still snuff'd the incense, teeming up  
From man to the sun's God ; yet unsecure :

For as among us mortals omens drear  
Fright and perplex, so also shuddered he— 170  
Not at dog's howl, or gloom-bird's hated screech,  
Or the familiar visiting of one  
Upon the first toll of his passing-bell,  
Or prophesyings of the midnight lamp ;  
But horrors, portion'd to a giant nerve,  
Oft made Hyperion ache. His palace bright  
Bastion'd with pyramids of glowing gold,  
And touch'd with shade of bronzed obelisks,  
Glar'd a blood-red through all its thousand courts,  
Arches, and domes, and fiery galleries ; 180  
And all its curtains of Aurorian clouds  
Flush'd angerly : while sometimes eagle's wings,  
Unseen before by Gods or wondering men,  
Darken'd the place ; and neighing steeds were heard,  
Not heard before by Gods or wondering men.  
Also, when he would taste the spicy wreaths

Of incense, breath'd aloft from sacred hills,  
Instead of sweets, his ample palate took  
Savour of poisonous brass and metal sick :  
And so, when harbour'd in the sleepy west, 190  
After the full completion of fair day,—  
For rest divine upon exalted couch  
And slumber in the arms of melody,  
He pac'd away the pleasant hours of ease  
With stride colossal, on from hall to hall ;  
While far within each aisle and deep recess,  
His winged minions in close clusters stood,  
Amaz'd and full of fear ; like anxious men  
Who on wide plains gather in panting troops,  
When earthquakes jar their battlements and towers. 200  
Even now, while Saturn, rous'd from icy trance,  
Went step for step with Thea through the woods,  
Hyperion, leaving twilight in the rear,  
Came slope upon the threshold of the west ;

Then, as was wont, his palace-door flew ope  
In smoothest silence, save what solemn tubes,  
Blown by the serious Zephyrs, gave of sweet  
And wandering sounds, slow-breathed melodies ;  
And like a rose in vermeil tint and shape,  
In fragrance soft, and coolness to the eye,      210  
That inlet to severe magnificence  
Stood full blown, for the God to enter in.

He enter'd, but he enter'd full of wrath ;  
His flaming robes stream'd out beyond his heels,  
And gave a roar, as if of earthly fire,  
That scar'd away the meek ethereal Hours  
And made their dove-wings tremble. On he flared,  
From stately nave to nave, from vault to vault,  
Through bowers of fragrant and enwreathed light,  
And diamond-paved lustrous long arcades,      220

Until he reach'd the great main cupola ;  
There standing fierce beneath, he stamp't his foot,  
And from the basements deep to the high towers  
Jarr'd his own golden region ; and before  
The quavering thunder thereupon had ceas'd,  
His voice leapt out, despite of godlike curb,  
To this result : “ O dreams of day and night !  
“ O monstrous forms ! O effigies of pain !  
“ O spectres busy in a cold, cold gloom !  
“ O lank-eared Phantoms of black-weeded pools ! 230  
“ Why do I know ye ? why have I seen ye ? why  
“ Is my eternal essence thus distraught  
“ To see and to behold these horrors new ?  
“ Saturn is fallen, am I too to fall ?  
“ Am I to leave this haven of my rest,  
“ This cradle of my glory, this soft clime,  
“ This calm luxuriance of blissful light,  
“ These crystallinè pavilions, and pure fanes,

“ Of all my lucent empire ? It is left

“ Deserted, void, nor any haunt of mine. 240

“ The blaze, the splendor, and the symmetry.

“ I cannot see—but darkness, death and darkness.

“ Even here, into my centre of repose,

“ The shady visions come to domineer,

“ Insult, and blind, and stifle up my pomp.—

“ Fall !—No, by Tellus and her briny robes !

“ Over the fiery frontier of my realms

“ I will advance a terrible right arm

“ Shall scare that infant thunderer, rebel Jove,

“ And bid old Saturn take his throne again.”— 250

He spake, and ceas'd, the while a heavier threat

Held struggle with his throat but came not forth ;

For as in theatres of crowded men

Hubbub increases more they call out “ Hush ! ”

So at Hyperion's words the Phantoms pale

Bestirr'd themselves, thrice horrible and cold ;

And from the mirror'd level where he stood  
A mist arose, as from a scummy marsh.  
At this, through all his bulk an agony  
Crept gradual, from the feet unto the crown, 260  
Like a lithe serpent vast and muscular  
Making slow way, with head and neck convuls'd  
From over-strained might. Releas'd, he fled  
To the eastern gates, and full six dewy hours  
Before the dawn in season due should blush,  
He breath'd fierce breath against the sleepy portals,  
Clear'd them of heavy vapours, burst them wide  
Suddenly on the ocean's chilly streams.  
The planet orb of fire, whereon he rode  
Each day from east to west the heavens through, 270  
Spun round in sable curtaining of clouds ;  
Not therefore veiled quite, blindfold, and hid,  
But ever and anon the glancing spheres,  
Circles, and arcs, and broad-belting colure,



Glow'd through, and wrought upon the muffling dark  
Sweet-shaped lightnings from the nadir deep  
Up to the zenith,—hieroglyphics old,  
Which sages and keen-eyed astrologers  
Then living on the earth, with labouring thought  
Won from the gaze of many centuries :           280  
Now lost, save what we find on remnants huge  
Of stone, or marble swart ; their import gone,  
Their wisdom long since fled.—Two wings this orb  
Possess'd for glory, two fair argent wings,  
Ever exalted at the God's approach .  
And now, from forth the gloom their plumes immense  
Rose, one by one, till all outspreaded were ;  
While still the dazzling globe maintain'd eclipse,  
Awaiting for Hyperion's command.  
Fain would he have commanded, fain took throne 290  
And bid the day begin, if but for change.  
He might not :—No, though a primeval God :

The sacred seasons might not be disturb'd.  
Therefore the operations of the dawn  
Stay'd in their birth, even as here 'tis told.  
Those silver wings expanded sisterly,  
Eager to sail their orb; the porches wide  
Open'd upon the dusk demesnes of night  
And the bright Titan, phrenzied with new woes,  
Unus'd to bend, by hard compulsion bent 300  
His spirit to the sorrow of the time;  
And all along a dismal rack of clouds,  
Upon the boundaries of day and night,  
He stretch'd himself in grief and radiance faint.  
There as he lay, the Heaven with its stars  
Look'd down on him with pity, and the voice  
Of Coelus, from the universal space,  
Thus whisper'd low and solemn in his ear.  
" O brightest of my children dear, earth-born  
" And sky-engendered, Son of Mysteries 310

“ All unrevealed even to the powers  
“ Which met at thy creating ; at whose joys  
“ And palpitations sweet, and pleasures soft,  
“ I, Cœlus, wonder, how they came and whence ;  
“ And at the fruits thereof what shapes they be,  
“ Distinct, and visible ; symbols divine,  
“ Manifestations of that beauteous life  
“ Diffus’d unseen throughout eternal space :  
“ Of these new-form’d art thou, oh brightest child !  
“ Of these, thy brethren and the Goddesses ! 326  
“ There is sad feud among ye, and rebellion  
“ Of son against his sire. I saw him fall,  
“ I saw my first-born tumbled from his throne !  
“ To me his arms were spread, to me his voice  
“ Found way from forth the thunders round his head !  
“ Pale wox I, and in vapours hid my face.  
“ Art thou, too, near such doom ? vague fear there is :  
“ For I have seen my sons most unlike Gods.

“ Divine ye were created, and divine

“ In sad demeanour, solemn, undisturb'd, 330

“ Unruffled, like high Gods, ye liv'd and ruled :

“ Now I behold in you fear, hope, and wrath ;

“ Actions of rage and passion ; even as

“ I see them, on the mortal world beneath,

“ In men who die.—This is the grief, O Son !

“ Sad sign of ruin, sudden dismay, and fall !

“ Yet do thou strive ; as thou art capable,

“ As thou canst move about, an evident God ;

“ And canst oppose to each malignant hour

“ Ethereal presence :—I am but a voice ; 340

“ My life is but the life of winds and tides,

“ No more than winds and tides can I avail :—

“ But thou canst.—Be thou therefore in the van

“ Of circumstance ; yea, seize the arrow's barb

“ Before the tense string murmur.—To the earth !

“ For there thou wilt find Saturn, and his woes.

“ Meantime I will keep watch on thy bright sun,  
“ And of thy seasons be a careful nurse.”—  
Ere half this region-whisper had come down,  
Hyperion arose, and on the stars 350  
Lifted his curved lids, and kept them wide  
Until it ceas’d ; and still he kept them wide :  
And still they were the same bright, patient stars.  
Then with a slow incline of his broad breast,  
Like to a diver in the pearly seas,  
Forward he stoop’d over the airy shore,  
And plung’d all noiseless into the deep night.



# HYPERION.

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## BOOK II.

JUST at the self-same beat of Time's wide wings  
Hyperion slid into the rustled air,  
And Saturn gain'd with Thea that sad place  
Where Cybele and the bruised Titans mourn'd.  
It was a den where no insulting light  
Could glimmer on their tears ; where their own groans  
They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar  
Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents hoarse,  
Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where.  
Crag jutting forth to crag, and rocks that seem'd 10

Ever as if just rising from a sleep,  
Forehead to forehead held their monstrous horns ;  
And thus in thousand hugest phantasies  
Made a fit roofing to this nest of woe.  
Instead of thrones, hard flint they sat upon,  
Couches of rugged stone, and slaty ridge  
Stubborn'd with iron. All were not assembled :  
Some chain'd in torture, and some wandering.  
Cœus, and Gyges, and Briareüs,  
Typhon, and Dolor, and Porphyrión,                    20  
With many more, the brawniest in assault,  
Were pent in regions of laborious breath ;  
Dungeon'd in opaque element, to keep  
Their clenched teeth still clench'd, and all their limbs  
Lock'd up like veins of metal, cramped and screw'd ;  
Without a motion, save of their big hearts  
Heaving in pain, and horribly convuls'd  
With sanguine feverous boiling gurge of pulse.



Mnemosyne was straying in the world ;  
Far from her moon had Phœbe wandered ;           30  
And many else were free to roam abroad,  
But for the main, here found they covert drear.  
Scarce images of life, one here, one there,  
Lay vast and edgeways ; like a dismal cirque  
Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,  
When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,  
In dull November, and their chancel vault,  
The Heaven itself, is blinded throughout night.  
Each one kept shroud, nor to his neighbour gave  
Or word, or look, 'or action of despair.           40  
Creüs was one ; his ponderous iron mace  
Lay by him, and a shatter'd rib of rock  
Told of his rage, ere he thus sank and pined.  
Iäpetus another ; in his grasp,  
A serpent's plashy neck ; its barbed tongue  
Squeez'd from the gorge, and all its uncurl'd length

Dead ; and because the creature could not spit  
Its poison in the eyes of conquering Jove.  
Next Cottus : prone he lay, chin uppermost,  
As though in pain ; for still upon the flint 50  
He ground severe his skull, with open mouth  
And eyes at horrid working. Nearest him  
Asia, born of most enormous Caf,  
Who cost her mother Tellus keener pangs,  
Though feminine, than any of her sons :  
More thought than woe was in her dusky face,  
For she was prophesying of her glory ;  
And in her wide imagination stood  
Palm-shaded temples, and high rival fanes,  
By Oxus or in Ganges' sacred isles. 60  
Even as Hope upon her anchor leans,  
So leant she, not so fair, upon a tusk  
Shed from the broadest of her elephants.  
Above her, on a crag's uneasy shelve,

Upon his elbow rais'd, all prostrate else,  
Shadow'd Enceladus ; once tame and mild  
As grazing ox unworried in the meads ;  
Now tiger-passion'd, lion-thoughted, wroth,  
He meditated, plotted, and even now  
Was hurling mountains in that second war,       70  
Not long delay'd, that scar'd the younger Gods  
To hide themselves in forms of beast and bird.  
Not far hence Atlas ; and beside him prone  
Phorcus, the sire of Gorgons. Neighbour'd close  
Oceanus, and Tethys, in whose lap  
Sobb'd Clymene among her tangled hair.  
In midst of all lay Themis, at the feet  
Of Ops the queen all clouded round from sight ;  
No shape distinguishable, more than when  
Thick night confounds the pine-tops with the clouds : 80  
And many else whose names may not be told.  
For when the Muse's wings are air-ward spread,

Who shall delay her flight ? And she must chaunt  
Of Saturn, and his guide, who now had climb'd  
With damp and slippery footing from a depth  
More horrid still. Above a sombre cliff  
Their heads appear'd, and up their stature grew  
Till on the level height their steps found ease :  
Then Thea spread abroad her trembling arms  
Upon the precincts of this nest of pain, 90  
And sidelong fix'd her eye on Saturn's face :  
There saw she direst strife ; the supreme God  
At war with all the frailty of grief,  
Of rage, of fear, anxiety, revenge,  
Remorse, spleen, hope, but most of all despair.  
Against these plagues he strove in vain ; for Fate  
Had pour'd a mortal oil upon his head,  
A disanointing poison : so that Thea,  
Affrighted, kept her still, and let him pass  
First onwards in, among the fallen tribe. 100

As with us mortal men, the laden heart  
Is persecuted more, and fever'd more,  
When it is nighing to the mournful house  
Where other hearts are sick of the same bruise ;  
So Saturn, as he walk'd into the midst,  
Felt faint, and would have sunk among the rest,  
But that he met Enceladus's eye,  
Whose mightiness, and awe of him, at once  
Came like an inspiration ; and he shouted,  
"Titans, behold your God !" at which some groan'd ; 110  
Some started on their feet ; some also shouted ;  
Some wept, some wail'd, all bow'd with reverence ;  
And Ops, uplifting her black folded veil,  
Show'd her pale cheeks, and all her forehead wan.  
Her eye-brows thin and jet, and hollow eyes.  
There is a roaring in the bleak-grown pines  
When Winter lifts his voice ; there is a noise  
Among immortals when a God gives sign,

With hushing finger, how he means to load  
His tongue with the full weight of utterless thought, 120  
With thunder, and with music, and with pomp :  
Such noise is like the roar of bleak-grown pines ;  
Which, when it ceases in this mountain'd world,  
No other sound succeeds ; but ceasing here,  
Among these fallen, Saturn's voice therefrom  
Grew up like organ, that begins anew  
Its strain, when other harmonies, stopt short,  
Leave the dinn'd air vibrating silverly.  
Thus grew it up—" Not in my own sad breast,  
" Which is its own great judge and searcher out, 130  
" Can I find reason why ye should be thus :  
" Not in the legends of the first of days,  
" Studied from that old spirit-leaved book  
" Which starry Uranus with finger bright  
" Sav'd from the shores of darkness, when the waves  
" Low-ebb'd still hid it up in shallow gloom ;—

“ And the which book ye know I ever kept  
“ For my firm-based footstool :—Ah, infirm !  
“ Not there, nor in sign, symbol, or portent  
“ Of element, earth, water, air, and fire,— 140  
“ At war, at peace, or inter-quarreling  
“ One against one, or two, or three, or all  
“ Each several one against the other three,  
“ As fire with air loud warring when rain-floods  
“ Drown both, and press them both against earth’s face.  
“ Where, finding sulphur, a quadruple wrath  
“ Unhinges the poor world ;—not in that strife,  
“ Wherefrom I take strange lore, and read it deep,  
“ Can I find reason why ye should be thus :  
“ No, no-where can unriddle, though I search, 150  
“ And pore on Nature’s universal scroll  
“ Even to swooning, why ye, Divinities,  
“ The first-born of all shap’d and palpable Gods,  
“ Should cower beneath what, in comparison,

“ Is untremendous might. Yet ye are here,  
“ O'erwhelm'd, and spurn'd, and batter'd, ye are here !  
“ O Titans, shall I say ' Arise ! '—Ye groan :  
“ Shall I say ' Crouch ! '—Ye groan. What can I then?  
“ O Heaven wide ! O unseen parent dear !  
“ What can I ? Tell me, all ye brethren Gods, 160  
“ How we can war, how engine our great wrath !  
“ O speak your counsel now, for Saturn's ear  
“ Is all a-hunger'd. Thou, Oceanus,  
“ Ponderest high and deep ; and in thy face  
“ I see, astonished, that severe content  
“ Which comes of thought and musing : give us help ! ”

So ended Saturn ; and the God of the Sea,  
Sophist and sage, from no Athenian grove,  
But cogitation in his watery shades,  
Arose, with locks not oozy, and began, 170  
In murmurs, which his first-endeavouring tongue



Caught infant-like from the far-foamed sands.

“ O ye, whom wrath consumes ! who, passion-stung,

“ Writhe at defeat, and nurse your agonies !

“ Shut up your senses, stifle up your ears,

“ My voice is not a bellows unto ire.

“ Yet listen, ye who will, whilst I bring proof

“ How ye, perforce, must be content to stoop :

“ And in the proof much comfort will I give,

“ If ye will take that comfort in its truth. 180

“ We fall by course of Nature's law, not force

“ Of thunder, or of Jove. Great Saturn, thou

“ Hast sifted well the atom-universe ;

“ But for this reason, that thou art the King,

“ And only blind from sheer supremacy,

“ One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,

“ Through which I wandered to eternal truth.

“ And first, as thou wast not the first of powers,

“ So art thou not the last ; it cannot be :

“Thou art not the beginning nor the end. 190  
“From chaos and parental darkness came  
“Light, the first fruits of that intestine broil,  
“That sullen ferment, which for wondrous ends  
“Was ripening in itself. The ripe hour came,  
“And with it light, and light, engendering  
“Upon its own producer, forthwith touch’d  
“The whole enormous matter into life.  
“Upon that very hour, our parentage,  
“The Heavens and the Earth, were manifest :  
“Then thou first-born, and we the giant-race, 200  
“Found ourselves ruling new and beauteous realms.  
“Now comes the pain of truth, to whom ’tis pain ;  
“O folly ! for to bear all naked truths,  
“And to envisage circumstance, all calm,  
“That is the top of sovereignty. Mark well !  
“As Heaven and Earth are fairer, fairer far  
“Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though once chiefs ;

“ And as we show beyond that Heaven and Earth  
“ In form and shape compact and beautiful,  
“ In will, in action free, companionship,           210  
“ And thousand other signs of purer life ;  
“ So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,  
“ A power more strong in beauty, born of us  
“ And fated to excel us, as we pass  
“ In glory that old Darkness : nor are we  
“ Thereby more conquer'd, than by us the rule  
“ Of shapeless Chaos. Say, doth the dull soil  
“ Quarrel with the proud forests it hath fed,  
“ And feedeth still, more comely than itself ?  
“ Can it deny the chieftdom of green groves ?   220  
“ Or shall the tree be envious of the dove  
“ Because it cooeth, and hath snowy wings  
“ To wander wherewithal and find its joys ?  
“ We are such forest-trees, and our fair boughs  
“ Have bred forth, not pale solitary doves,

“ But eagles golden-feather’d, who do tower  
“ Above us in their beauty, and must reign  
“ In right thereof; for ’tis the eternal law  
“ That first in beauty should be first in might :  
“ Yea, by that law, another race may drive 230  
“ Our conquerors to mourn as we do now.  
“ Have ye beheld the young God of the Seas,  
“ My dispossessor? Have ye seen his face?  
“ Have ye beheld his chariot, foam’d along  
“ By noble winged creatures he hath made?  
“ I saw him on the calmed waters scud,  
“ With such a glow of beauty in his eyes,  
“ That it enforc’d me to bid sad farewell  
“ To all my empire: farewell sad I took,  
“ And hither came, to see how dolorous fate 240  
“ Had wrought upon ye; and how I might best  
“ Give consolation in this woe extreme.  
“ Receive the truth, and let it be your balm.”

Whether through poz'd conviction, or disdain,  
They guarded silence, when Oceanus  
Left murmuring, what deepest thought can tell?  
But so it was, none answer'd for a space,  
Save one whom none regarded, Clymene;  
And yet she answer'd not, only complain'd,  
With hectic lips, and eyes up-looking mild, 250  
Thus wording timidly among the fierce:  
"O Father, I am here the simplest voice,  
"And all my knowledge is that joy is gone,  
"And this thing woe crept in among our hearts,  
"There to remain for ever, as I fear:  
"I would not bode of evil, if I thought  
"So weak a creature could turn off the help  
"Which by just right should come of mighty Gods;  
"Yet let me tell my sorrow, let me tell  
"Of what I heard, and how it made me weep, 260  
"And know that we had parted from all hope.

“ I stood upon a shore, a pleasant shore,  
“ Where a sweet clime was breathed from a land  
“ Of fragrance, quietness, and trees, and flowers.  
“ Full of calm joy it was, as I of grief;  
“ Too full of joy and soft delicious warmth;  
“ So that I felt a movement in my heart  
“ To chide, and to reproach that solitude  
“ With songs of misery, music of our woes;  
“ And sat me down, and took a mouthed shell 270  
“ And murmur’d into it, and made melody—  
“ O melody no more! for while I sang,  
“ And with poor skill let pass into the breeze  
“ The dull shell’s echo, from a bowery strand  
“ Just opposite, an island of the sea,  
“ There came enchantment with the shifting wind,  
“ That did both drown and keep alive my ears.  
“ I threw my shell away upon the sand,  
“ And a wave fill’d it, as my sense was fill’d

“ With that new blissful golden melody.                    280  
“ A living death was in each gush of sounds,  
“ Each family of rapturous hurried notes,  
“ That fell, one after one, yet all at once,  
“ Like pearl beads dropping sudden from their string :  
“ And then another, then another strain,  
“ Each like a dove leaving its olive perch,  
“ With music wing’d instead of silent plumes,  
“ To hover round my head, and make me sick  
“ Of joy and grief at once. Grief overcame,  
“ And I was stopping up my frantic ears,                    290  
“ When, past all hindrance of my trembling hands,  
“ A voice came sweeter, sweeter than all tune,  
“ And still it cried, ‘ Apollo ! young Apollo !  
“ ‘ The morning-bright Apollo ! young Apollo ! ’  
“ I fled, it follow’d me, and cried ‘ Apollo ! ’  
“ O Father, and O Brethren, had ye felt  
“ Those pains of mine ; O Saturn, hadst thou felt,

“Ye would not call this too indulged tongue  
 “Presumptuous, in thus venturing to be heard.”

So far her voice flow'd on, like timorous brook 300  
 That, lingering along a pebbled coast,  
 Doth fear to meet the sea : but sea it met,  
 And shudder'd ; for the overwhelming voice  
 Of huge Enceladus swallow'd it in wrath :  
 The ponderous syllables, like sullen waves  
 In the half-glutted hollows of reef-rocks,  
 Came booming thus, while still upon his arm  
 He lean'd ; not rising, from supreme contempt.  
 “Or shall we listen to the over-wise,  
 “Or to the over-foolish, Giant-Gods ? - <sup>SEE P. 200</sup> 310  
 “Not thunderbolt on thunderbolt, till all  
 “That rebel Jove's whole armoury were spent,  
 “Not world on world upon these shoulders piled,  
 “Could agonize me more than baby-words



“ In midst of this dethronement horrible.

“ Speak ! roar ! shout ! yell ! ye sleepy Titans all.

“ Do ye forget the blows, the buffets vile ?

“ Are ye not smitten by a youngling arm ?

“ Dost thou forget, sham Monarch of the Waves,

“ Thy scalding in the seas ? What, have I rous'd 320

“ Your spleens with so few simple words as these ?

“ O joy ! for now I see ye are not lost :

“ O joy ! for now I see a thousand eyes

“ Wide glaring for revenge ! ”—As this he said,

He lifted up his stature vast, and stood,

Still without intermission speaking thus :

“ Now ye are flames, I'll tell you how to burn,

“ And purge the ether of our enemies ;

“ How to feed fierce the crooked stings of fire,

“ And singe away the swollen clouds of Jove, 330

“ Stifling that puny essence in its tent.

“ O let him feel the evil he hath done ;

“For though I scorn Oceanus’s lore,  
“Much pain have I for more than loss of realms :  
“The days of peace and slumberous calm are fled ;  
“Those days, all innocent of scathing war,  
“When all the fair Existences of heaven  
“Came open-eyed to guess what we would speak :—  
“That was before our brows were taught to frown,  
“Before our lips knew else but solemn sounds ; 340  
“That was before we knew the winged thing,  
“Victory, might be lost, or might be won.  
“And be ye mindful that Hyperion,  
“Our brightest brother, still is undisgraced—  
“Hyperion, lo ! his radiance is here !”

All eyes were on Enceladus’s face,  
And they beheld, while still Hyperion’s name  
Flew from his lips up to the vaulted rocks,  
A pallid gleam across his features stern :

Not savage, for he saw full many a God 350  
Wroth as himself. He look'd upon them all,  
And in each face he saw a gleam of light,  
But splendor in Saturn's, whose hoar locks  
Shone like the bubbling foam about a keel  
When the prow sweeps into a midnight cove.  
In pale and silver silence they remain'd,  
Till suddenly a splendour, like the morn,  
Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps,  
All the sad spaces of oblivion,  
And every gulf, and every chasm old, 360  
And every height, and every sullen depth,  
Voiceless, or hoarse with loud tormented streams :  
And all the everlasting cataracts,  
And all the headlong torrents far and near,  
Mantled before in darkness and huge shade,  
Now saw the light and made it terrible.  
It was Hyperion :—a granite peak

His bright feet touch'd, and there he stay'd to view  
The misery his brilliance had betray'd  
To the most hateful seeing of itself. 370  
Golden his hair of short Numidian curl,  
Regal his shape majestic, a vast shade  
In midst of his own brightness, like the bulk  
Of Memnon's image at the set of sun  
To one who travels from the dusking East :  
Sighs, too, as mournful as that Memnon's harp  
He utter'd, while his hands contemplative  
He press'd together, and in silence stood.  
Despondence seiz'd again the fallen Gods  
At sight of the dejected King of Day, 380  
And many hid their faces from the light :  
But fierce Enceladus sent forth his eyes  
Among the brotherhood ; and, at their glare,  
Uprose Iäpetus, and Creüs too,  
And Phorcus, sea-born, and together strode

To where he towered on his eminence.

There those four shouted forth old Saturn's name ;

Hyperion from the peak loud answered, " Saturn ! "

Saturn sat near the Mother of the Gods,

In whose face was no joy, though all the Gods 390

Gave from their hollow throats the name of " Saturn ! "



# HYPERION.

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## BOOK III.

THUS in alternate uproar and sad peace,  
Amazed were those Titans utterly.  
O leave them, Muse! O leave them to their woes;  
For thou art weak to sing such tumults dire:  
A solitary sorrow best befits  
Thy lips, and antheing a lonely grief.  
Leave them, O Muse! for thou anon wilt find  
Many a fallen old Divinity  
Wandering in vain about bewildered shores.  
Meantime touch piously the Delphic harp,

And not a wind of heaven but will breathe  
In aid soft warble from the Dorian flute ;  
For lo ! 'tis for the Father of all verse.  
Flush every thing that hath a vermeil hue,  
Let the rose glow intense and warm the air,  
And let the clouds of even and of morn  
Float in voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills ;  
Let the red wine within the goblet boil,  
Cold as a bubbling well ; let faint-lipp'd shells,  
On sands, or in great deeps, vermilion turn 20  
Through all their labyrinths ; and let the maid  
Blush keenly, as with some warm kiss surpris'd.  
Chief isle of the embowered Cyclades,  
Rejoice, O Delos, with thine olives green,  
And poplars, and lawn-shading palms, and beech,  
In which the Zephyr breathes the loudest song,  
And hazels thick, dark-stemm'd beneath the shade :  
Apollo is once more the golden theme !



Where was he, when the Giant of the Sun  
Stood bright, amid the sorrow of his peers? 30  
Together had he left his mother fair  
And his twin-sister sleeping in their bower,  
And in the morning twilight wandered forth  
Beside the osiers of a rivulet,  
Full ankle-deep in lilies of the vale.  
The nightingale had ceas'd, and a few stars  
Were lingering in the heavens, while the thrush  
Began calm-throated. Throughout all the isle  
There was no covert, no retired cave  
Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of waves, 40  
Though scarcely heard in many a green recess.  
He listen'd, and he wept, and his bright tears  
Went trickling down the golden bow he held.  
Thus with half-shut suffused eyes he stood,  
While from beneath some cumbrous boughs hard by

With solemn step an awful Goddess came,  
And there was purport in her looks for him,  
Which he with eager guess began to read  
Perplex'd, the while melodiously he said :

“ How cam'st thou over the unfooted sea ?      50

“ Or hath that antique mien and robed form

“ Mov'd in these vales invisible till now ?

“ Sure I have heard those vestments sweeping o'er

“ The fallen leaves, when I have sat alone

“ In cool mid-forest. Surely I have traced

“ The rustle of those ample skirts about

“ These grassy solitudes, and seen the flowers

“ Lift up their heads, as still the whisper pass'd.

“ Goddess ! I have beheld those eyes before,

“ And their eternal calm, and all that face,      60

“ Or I have dream'd.”—“ Yes,” said the supreme shape,

“ Thou hast dream'd of me ; and awaking up

“ Didst find a lyre all golden by thy side,  
“ Whose strings touch’d by thy fingers, all the vast  
“ Unwearied ear of the whole universe  
“ Listen’d in pain and pleasure at the birth  
“ Of such new tuneful wonder. Is’t not strange  
“ That thou shouldst weep, so gifted? Tell me, youth,  
“ What sorrow thou canst feel; for I am sad  
“ When thou dost shed a tear: explain thy griefs 70  
“ To one who in this lonely isle hath been  
“ The watcher of thy sleep and hours of life,  
“ From the young day when first thy infant hand  
“ Pluck’d witless the weak flowers, till thine arm  
“ Could bend that bow heroic to all times.  
“ Show thy heart’s secret to an ancient Power  
“ Who hath forsaken old and sacred thrones  
“ For prophecies of thee, and for the sake  
“ Of loveliness new born.”—Apollo then,

With sudden scrutiny and gloomless eyes,           80  
Thus answer'd, while his white melodious throat  
Throbb'd with the syllables.—“ Mnemosyne !  
“ Thy name is on my tongue, I know not how ;  
“ Why should I tell thee what thou so well seest ?  
“ Why should I strive to show what from thy lips  
“ Would come no mystery ? For me, dark, dark,  
“ And painful vile oblivion seals my eyes :  
“ I strive to search wherefore I am so sad,  
“ Until a melancholy numbs my limbs ;  
“ And then upon the grass I sit, and moan,           90  
“ Like one who once had wings.—O why should I  
“ Feel curs'd and thwarted, when the liegeless air  
“ Yields to my step aspirant ? why should I  
“ Spurn the green turf as hateful to my feet ?  
“ Goddess benign, point forth some unknown thing :  
“ Are there not other regions than this isle ?

- “ What are the stars ? There is the sun, the sun !  
“ And the most patient brilliance of the moon !  
“ And stars by thousands ! Point me out the way  
“ To any one particular beauteous star, 100  
“ And I will flit into it with my lyre,  
“ And make its silvery splendour pant with bliss.  
“ I have heard the cloudy thunder : Where is power ?  
“ Whose hand, whose essence, what divinity  
“ Makes this alarum in the elements,  
“ While I here idle listen on the shores  
“ In fearless yet in aching ignorance ?  
“ O tell me, lonely Goddess, by thy harp,  
“ That waileth every morn and eventide,  
“ Tell me why thus I rave, about these groves ! 110  
“ Mute thou remainest—Mute ! yet I can read  
“ A wondrous lesson in thy silent face :  
“ Knowledge enormous makes a God of me.

“ Names, deeds, gray legends, dire events, rebellions,  
“ Majesties, sovran voices, agonies,  
“ Creations and destroyings, all at once  
“ Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,  
“ And deify me, as if some blithe wine  
“ Or bright elixir peerless I had drunk,  
“ And so become immortal.”—Thus the God, 120  
While his enkindled eyes, with level glance  
Beneath his white soft temples, stedfast kept  
Trembling with light upon Mnemosyne.  
Soon wild commotions shook him, and made flush  
All the immortal fairness of his limbs;  
Most like the struggle at the gate of death;  
Or liker still to one who should take leave  
Of pale immortal death, and with a pang  
As hot as death’s is chill, with fierce convulse  
Die into life : so young Apollo anguish’d : 130

His very hair, his golden tresses famed  
Kept undulation round his eager neck.  
During the pain Mnemosyne upheld  
Her arms as one who prophesied.—At length  
Apollo shriek'd ;—and lo ! from all his limbs  
Celestial       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*  
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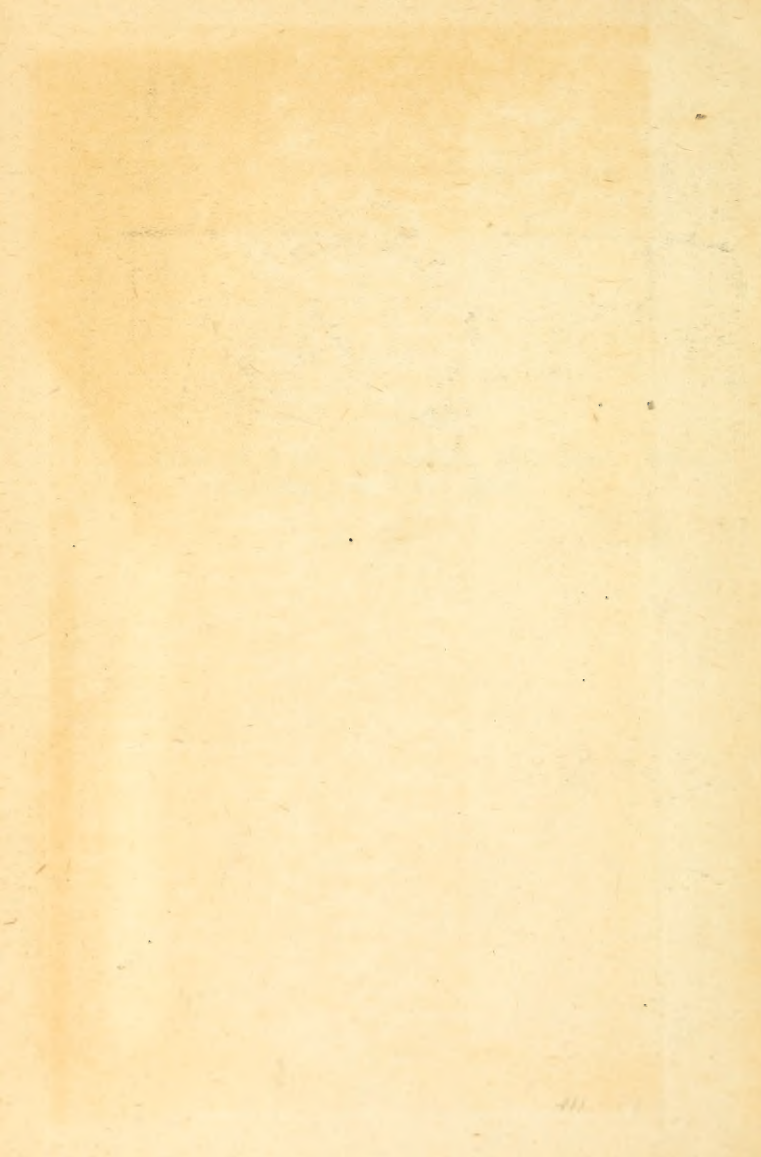
THE END.

NOTE.

PAGE 184, l. 310. over-foolish, Giant-Gods? *MS.* :  
over-foolish giant, Gods? 1820.







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